

*MI VIDA ESPIRITUAL:*  
ELEVATING THE VOICE OF 1.5 AND 2<sup>ND</sup> GENERATION LATINOS IN THEOLOGICAL  
STUDIES

A Practical Research Project  
presented to  
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In Partial Fulfillment  
of the Requirements for the Degree  
Doctor of Ministry

by  
Roger Garcia

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## ABSTRACT

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The Latino population continues to be a demographic of interest in American spheres of politics, economics, education, and so forth. The same is certainly true within religious circles, with a growing realization by religious leadership regarding how much this demographic is substantially growing and needs to be catered to for religious, spiritual, and ministerial outreach, support, and involvement. From the history of the Roman Catholic Church catering to those of Mexican nationality and heritage before and after the 1848 Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo ceded territory to the United States, to the issues faced by the Assemblies of God (AG) in the mid-1900s when a substantial amount of Latino Pentecostals joined the denomination and sought influence in the decisions that affected AG Hispanic churches across the U.S.,<sup>1</sup> to a growing number of modern agnostic and atheist Latinos, religious entities across faiths are launching initiatives specifically geared to this growing U.S. demographic. While some national studies

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<sup>1</sup> Miguel A. De La Torre and Edwin David Aponte, *Introducing Latino/a Theologies* (Maryknoll, NY: ORBIS Books, 2001), 98; Gastón Espinosa, *Latino Pentecostals in America: Faith and Politics in Action* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2014), 109-163.

have been conducted on Latino religious trends, very little scholarship exists on the 1.5- and 2<sup>nd</sup>- generation Latino from Gen Z to Gen X. These are the younger adult Latinos that are coming of age and finding their own way in religious maturity and affiliation. This study seeks to collect modern data on what the religious affiliation trends are of this demographic and to elevate their voices as it relates to their own desires for spiritual care, growth, and support.

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Introduction

**My Personal Connection**

At the core of my research motivation is the desire to understand the latest religious trends of second (2<sup>nd</sup>) generation and one-point-five (1.5) generation Latinos (e.g. religious affiliation, religious conversions, religious disengagement, and re-engagement), as well as a crucial related inquiry, which is the question of what does this demographic desires when it comes to their own spiritual care and practices. The impetus for this research desire is personal for me considering I am a part of this demographic and have had a spiritual journey with many changes and shifts. Aside from this personal connection, I also believe that this research will have great value for both continuing scholarship on the topic, as well as tremendous ministerial value regarding religious organizations and leaders being able to have a better understanding of what this population is doing and exploring in relation to religious practices and affiliation. Even more importantly, it will provide insight into what people in this demographic are seeking when it comes to their own personal spiritual growth. It is my hope that this understanding will lead to more religious institutions and their outreach efforts being able to better meet the needs of the spiritual life of 2<sup>nd</sup>- and 1.5-generation Latinos.

As mentioned, I am a second-generation Latino in the United States, born to immigrant parents from Mexico and Honduras. In relation to my religious and spiritual journey, I feel that I have been through the full spectrum of Christianity and was also agnostic for a time. From birth

to about the 6th grade, I was raised Catholic and attended a Spanish-speaking Catholic church, which is the same religious upbringing of about three-fourths of Latinos in the U.S.<sup>2</sup> By the time I reached middle school, my mother stopped attending our local Catholic church in Columbus, Nebraska, claiming that they were “all about the money.” Whether that was a valid claim or not, that led me to not have any church home nor spiritual life emphasis from middle school to my freshman year in college, so during this time I was disengaged but to some extent still affiliated with my Catholic upbringing. In 2005, in the midst of personal hardships and as a freshman in college, I reflected on my distress and decided that I needed God in my life. However, was I to go back to my Catholic roots or try something different? Well, due to a seed planted by my high school significant other, who was Presbyterian and took me to church a couple times, I ended up attending a Presbyterian in Omaha, Nebraska, where I lived then and now. Despite the church being a virtually 100% White and very affluent congregation, I was very much welcomed into the church and treated with incredible love. So, I experienced this significant change in denominational affiliation (i.e. from Catholic to Presbyterian). I spent about a year at this new church and truly enjoyed the services and the bonding with fellow church congregants, and even got baptized as an adult at this church, despite having been baptized as a child in the Catholic church; I simply felt like I wanted to make the conscious decision of the faith that I was choosing now as an adult.

Moving across town in Omaha and the distractions of college life ultimately led me astray from my newfound spiritual life. So, I fell away from that church, my spiritual focus and journey, and even from my core Christian beliefs for about seven years. Toward the end of this

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<sup>2</sup> “The Shifting Religious Identity of Latinos in the United States,” Pew Research Center, May 7, 2014, <https://www.pewforum.org/2014/05/07/the-shifting-religious-identity-of-latinos-in-the-united-states/>.



disengaged period, I considered myself agnostic, believing in a higher power but aligning myself with more of a Deist belief that there was a creator of the universe but that this creator left us to our own actions and destiny that we ourselves create. During this time, I still would think of the image of Jesus as a familiar face for seeking the Creator, but I also thought at that time that “who really knows what is real and what is not?” in relation to the Divine. Ultimately, following another very difficult period in my life at age 28, I had an innate urge to re-engage with God and truly commit myself to a permanent dedication to spiritual growth. This was in mid-2014, and since then I have vigorously read and researched Hebrew and Christian scripture, attended and explored various Christian churches to find the right fit, married someone with a lifelong ministry background, and I am here finishing my Doctor of Ministry degree. In sum, I am one 2<sup>nd</sup>-generation Latino in the U.S., and while every single person in this category is different, I think the theme of spiritual exploration and religious changes or shifts is becoming an ever more frequent occurrence with this population, and this is what is at the heart of this thesis and research.

### **Contemplating 1.5- and 2<sup>nd</sup>-Generation Latino Shifts in Religion**

In college and post-college, I noticed that my personal religious/spiritual journey was not unique in relation to having moments of questioning my beliefs, becoming disengaged, and even having shifts and changes in affiliation. I had other peers that also became disengaged, made other aspects of their life a priority over spiritual growth, and could have benefited from some spiritual or ministerial outreach and support that better catered to who they are as 1.5- and 2<sup>nd</sup>-generation Latino of a younger generation (e.g. Gen Z, Millennial, Generation X).

This research project is intended to reveal insight into the unique trends of religious affiliation and spiritual practices of 1.5- and 2<sup>nd</sup>-generation Latinos utilizing the limited research

that has been conducted to date on this specific demographic, while also conducting my own nationwide study that will reveal 2021 data that can contribute insight into these matters.

### **Overview of The Latino Population in the U.S.**

As of July 2021, the U.S. Census estimates the U.S. population at 331,893,745 individuals residing in the country. The Hispanic ethnicity (of any race) is estimated to be 18.5% in the U.S., which equates to approximately 61.4 million Hispanics.<sup>3</sup> In relation to the Hispanic/Latino population from 2010 to 2020, the Hispanic population growing by 23%. In contrast, the population that was not of Hispanic or Latino origin only grew by 4.3% since 2010.<sup>4</sup> Latinos also represent 51.1% of the country's population growth during this time span. The Hispanic demographic also saw a drop in "White" racial affiliation" from 26.7 million in 2010 to 12.6 million in 2020 and a dramatic increase in "more than one race" from 3 million to 20.3 million during the same period.

Moreover, as of the 2020 Census, Latinos are now the largest population group in California and virtually equal the White population in Texas with Whites at 39.7% and Latinos at 39.3%.<sup>5</sup> Latinos also continue to diversify their residential footprint across new regions, urban areas, and rural parts of the U.S. As Brookings cites, "There are 155 metro areas where Latino or Hispanic growth exceeded the group's nationwide growth by over 150%. Eighty-nine of those grew by over 200%, and 23 grew by over 300%. According to analysis by the Brookings

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<sup>3</sup> "U.S. Census Bureau QuickFacts: United States," U.S. Census Bureau, last modified July 1, 2021, <https://www.census.gov/quickfacts/fact/table/US/PST045221>.

<sup>4</sup> Nicholas Jones, et al., "2020 Census Illuminates Racial and Ethnic Composition of the Country," U.S. Census Bureau, August 12, 2021, <https://www.census.gov/library/stories/2021/08/improved-race-ethnicity-measures-reveal-united-states-population-much-more-multiracial.html>.

<sup>5</sup> Suzanne Gamboa, "Latinos Account for Over Half of the Country's Population Growth," NBC News, August 12, 2021, <https://www.nbcnews.com/news/latino/latinos-account-half-countrys-population-growth-rcna1667>.

Institution, these areas are spread all over the country, especially in metro areas where Latino or Hispanic populations were gaining new footholds: those in the Midwest, Northeast, and Southeast, including several parts of Florida.”<sup>6</sup>

### **Defining Cultural Terms & Age Focus**

The intention of this section is both to help define cultural terms for the current reader and to develop a framework for expanded research on this topic. Many of the parameters in relation to cultural, ethnic, and racial identification will follow terms used by the Pew Research Center’s “The Shifting Religious Identity of Latinos in the United States” published in 2014.<sup>7</sup>

In the 2014 Pew Research Center study, they allowed all people ages 18 or older who identified themselves of Latino origin or descent as individuals eligible to participate in the study.<sup>8</sup> Since the status of legally being an adult is 19 in some states (e.g. such as my residential state of Nebraska), I used the age of 19 for my study that involved consenting as an adult to an IRB-approved study. Moreover, studying individuals that have reached the minimum age of 19 assures that some time for personal maturation has been given for individuals in relation to exploring and affirming one’s own faith and spiritual life, as opposed to asking a child or adolescent to discuss their choices regarding religious affiliation and spiritual practices. At an age younger than 19, an individual is likely to still be following their embedded theology set forth by their parent or guardian.

Regarding ethnic identity, Pew’s 2014 study used self-identified “Latino origin or

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<sup>6</sup> William H. Frey, “Mapping America’s Diversity with the 2020 Census,” The Brookings Institution, September 21, 2021, <https://www.brookings.edu/research/mapping-americas-diversity-with-the-2020-census/>.

<sup>7</sup> Pew Research Center, “Shifting Religious Identity.”

<sup>8</sup> Pew Research Center, “Shifting Religious Identity.”

descent” as a means of eligibility.<sup>9</sup> Their report also states that “The terms *Hispanic* and *Latino* are both used to describe people who are of Hispanic or Latino origin or descent” and utilizes “Latino” and “Hispanic” interchangeably when speaking of this population in the U.S. While I sought to continue some congruence with the Pew study, I defined my eligibility as:

To participate in this study, you must:

1. Be at least 19 years old
2. Have at least one immigrant parent from Mexico, Central America, South America, or the Caribbean
3. Must have been born from 1965 onward (Generation X through Gen Z)
4. Must have been born in the U.S. (2<sup>nd</sup>-generation) or have been brought to the U.S. as a child (1.5-generation)

For this thesis and my own future study, I will use *Latino* as the primary term. However, please note that *Latinx* or *Hispanic* could, in most cases, take the place of Latino, while still referring to the same population. Moreover, one’s preferred term is a matter of personal choice, one that should be respected for any individual wishing to prefer and self-identify as Hispanic, Latinx, Latino, Latin@, Chicano, Mexican-American, Cuban-American, or any other nationality (e.g. Mexican, Guatemalan) or nationality combination (e.g. Salvadoran-American) that one chooses to use, alongside various indigenous, African, and Asian origin terms that could be used to describe the extensively diverse populations that live in Latin America and Latinos in the United States. An expanded glossary of definitions, terms, guidelines, and parameters can be found in *Appendix 1* and 2021 results for preferred ethnic terms can be found further in this study.

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<sup>9</sup> Pew Research Center, “Shifting Religious Identity.”

## Literature Review

In relation to available scholarly research on Latino religious affiliation in general, let alone second-generation Latino religious affiliation, one will find that there are strong limitations, alongside opportunities for new and expanded research on this topic. Moreover, for the research studies that do exist, they often approach Latino religion through the aspects of affiliation, conversion, and political stances, but few seek that qualitative aspect related to the spiritual care desires and needs of this demographic from their own perspective; one void I am hoping to help fill.

Regarding the research that is available, the Pew Research Center's 2014 report on Latino religious affiliation and conversion is the largest study on Latino religion in the U.S. in the 21<sup>st</sup> century thus far.<sup>10</sup> The report gives tremendous insight into overall Latino trends in the U.S., alongside some insight specifically into second-generation Latinos. In viewing this study at a macro level, one will see that out of all that were surveyed at a national level between May 2013 to July 2013 (4,080 total), 55% of Latinos were Catholic, while 22% were Protestant (5% mainstream and 16% Evangelical), 18% were unaffiliated, and 4% were "other". In comparison to pre-2010 Latino demographic data cited within the same study, Latinos had a substantial decline in Catholic affiliation from 67% in 2010 to 55% in 2013, making it a 12% decrease in just three years. Over the same span of time, unaffiliated Latinos increased from 10% to 18%, marking a substantial 8% increase in unaffiliated Latinos. When broken down into age groups, the study finds that those aged 18 to 29 declined in Catholic affiliation by an even higher rate of 15% and similarly those 30 to 49 declined 14%, while only 7% of those 50 and older declined in Catholic affiliation. As one can see, the shift is greater in the younger age groups, which is where

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<sup>10</sup> Pew Research Center, "Shifting Religious Identity."

one would find a higher number of second- and 1.5-generation Latinos.

Another interesting note is that Evangelical Protestant number increased by 4% from 2010 to 2013, though in the 30 to 49 age group, it increased by 6%.<sup>11</sup> An even greater change is occurring in the unaffiliated category for those of age 18 to 29, where there was a 17% increase, making it a total of 31% in this age group. For those 30 to 49 there was a 6% increase and 50 and older saw 4%. Across all religious affiliation categories, the crux of the change is clearly in the younger age groups, most particularly in 18 to 29's, but also in 30 to 49's. This continues the trend of seeing the most drastic changes within the Millennial and Generation X age groups.

It is important to note for context that post-Columbian (after the Spanish Conquest) Latin America became entirely Roman Catholic either by force on the native populations or continued religious affiliation by the Spanish Conquistadors. This Catholic domination reigned supreme from the 16<sup>th</sup> century through the mid-20<sup>th</sup> century, hence why the majority of Latinos in the U.S. who have immigrated from Latin America have either a current or previous Catholic affiliation. The 2014 Pew study states that the substantial conversion rates we are seeing in the U.S. could be in part because religious changes are also underway in Latin America, with a strong Evangelical and Pentecostal push in the 20<sup>th</sup> century, combined with mainstream Protestant missionaries, and also a growing number of unaffiliated in Latin America as well.<sup>12</sup> Hence, when a first-generation Latino immigrant migrates to the U.S., while the majority are still likely to be Catholic, a growing number of them immigrate having already converted to Protestantism. Pew Research Center (2014) cites that 77% of Latinos say they were raised Catholic, though 24% of

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<sup>11</sup> Pew Research Center, "Shifting Religious Identity."

<sup>12</sup> Pew Research Center, "Shifting Religious Identity."

those raised Catholic have left Catholicism.<sup>13</sup> Nonetheless, with over three-fourths of Latinos in the U.S. having been raised Catholic, this showcases both the continued Catholic dominance in Latin America and with first-generation Latinos who immigrate to the U.S.

To wrap up the wealth of information found in Pew's 2014 study, let's explore differences found among Latino generations. In the study, the term "foreign born" is used to describe the first-generation that moved to the U.S.<sup>14</sup> The terms *second-generation* and *third-generation* are presumed to be U.S.-born Latinos. While the study did not find significant differences between the second and third generation, the differences between the first and second generation are drastic. For example, at the time of the study, the first generation identified as 60% Catholic while the second was found to be 50% Catholic. Moreover, the second was slightly more likely to be Protestant than the first generation, at a 2% higher rate. Of most contrast is the unaffiliated category, with only 15% of the first generation identifying as unaffiliated while 24% of the second generation identified as such, making it virtually one out of four in the second-generation claiming to be religiously unaffiliated. Clearly, something drastic is happening in the second-generation that needs to be further explored in relation to why so many are becoming unaffiliated. Overall, the crux of religious affiliation changes and conversions is again demonstrated to be with the second-generation from this study of first-, second-, and third-generation Latinos.

In another study, Larry L. Hunt also notes that the population referred to by the U.S. government as Hispanic has historically been Roman Catholic, while also noting that a significant growing number of Hispanics both in the U.S. and in Latin America have left

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<sup>13</sup> Pew Research Center, "Shifting Religious Identity."

<sup>14</sup> Pew Research Center, "Shifting Religious Identity."

Catholicism.<sup>15</sup> Utilizing data from the National Alcohol Study in 1984, Hunt found that 77% of Hispanics were Catholic versus 16% being Protestant and 6% other.<sup>16</sup> He also found that most Hispanic Protestants were affiliated with “fundamentalists” churches.<sup>17</sup> In regard to socio-economic status, mainline Protestants did tend to have higher education and income level, while Hispanic fundamentalists Protestants showed no significant difference in social-economic status compared to their Catholic counterparts and often appeared to have more “marginal and lower status” among the U.S. Hispanic population overall. Hunt also analyzed data from the National Opinion Research Center that spanned from 1972 to 1996 with a sample size of 1,449 Hispanics out of a study of 45,294 U.S. residents.<sup>18</sup> Notably, while the sample size is relatively large for a study, the study did not target Hispanics specifically, nor did it have Spanish surveying capability, therefore only English speakers (Hispanic or not) were surveyed. Despite these limitations, the survey did find some valuable and what appears to be valid insight into Hispanic religious affiliation. For example, this study also portrayed a dramatic drop in Catholic affiliation from 78% to 67% over the study’s time period, coinciding with the continuing drop in Catholic affiliation also portrayed by the Pew studies conducted in 2007 and 2013.<sup>19</sup> The study also found that the 1970’s and 80’s found larger conversions into “fundamentalists” Protestant churches,

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<sup>15</sup> Larry L. Hunt, “Hispanic Protestantism in the United States: Trends by Decade and Generation,” *Social Forces* 77, no. 4 (June 1999): 1601-1624, <https://doi.org/10.2307/3005888>.

<sup>16</sup> Hunt, “Hispanic Protestantism,” 1603.

<sup>17</sup> Hunt, “Hispanic Protestantism,” 1604.

<sup>18</sup> Hunt, “Hispanic Protestantism,” 1604.

<sup>19</sup> Hunt, “Hispanic Protestantism,” 1609; Roberto Suro, et al., “Changing Faiths: Latinos and the Transformation of American Religion,” Pew Research Center, April 25, 2007, <https://www.pewresearch.org/hispanic/2007/04/25/changing-faiths-latinos-and-the-transformation-of-american-religion/>; Pew Research Center, “Shifting Religious Identity.”



rather than mainstream Protestant churches, but did not find this advantage in the 1990's.<sup>20</sup> Moreover, Hunt argues that in this data, no substantial increase in conversions to Protestantism occurred within an individual life cycle (i.e. within one generation), but rather that Protestant growth may be more linked to “inter-generational dynamics” rather than “intra-generational” changes in religious affiliation.<sup>21</sup> Moreover, he found that being a first-generation Hispanic meant having a much lower statistical possibility for conversion from Catholic to Protestant while later generations had a much higher statistical possibility of being non-Catholic.<sup>22</sup> The argument continues that our second-generation Latino population is more the crux for religious change rather than the first generation, and hence, merits a closer study into the reasonings, dynamics, and motivations for second-generation religious affiliation and practices.

One key question that lingers with Latino religious identity is the question of why individuals convert from a strong, historical culture of Catholicism to being something often perceived as radically different from that historical tradition, becoming a Protestant, whether mainstream or not. Researchers Ramos, Woodberry, and Ellison (2017) tackle this question head-on with the usage of multiple theories and also the utilization of 2006 Pew Research Center data.<sup>23</sup> To Ramos, Woodberry, and Ellison, one theory behind this religious decision-making is the “rational choice theory” where one weighs the benefits of pursuing a specific religion and its religious rewards, such as the promise of heaven, associated social status, and access to networks

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<sup>20</sup> Hunt, “Hispanic Protestantism,” 1609.

<sup>21</sup> Hunt, “Hispanic Protestantism,” 1615.

<sup>22</sup> Hunt, “Hispanic Protestantism,” 1615.

<sup>23</sup> Aida I. Ramos, Robert D. Woodberry, and Christopher G. Ellison, “The Contexts of Conversion among U.S. Latinos,” *Sociology of Religion* 78, no. 2 (Summer 2017): 119-145, <https://doi.org/10.1093/socrel/srx014>; Suro, et al., “Changing Faiths.”

and people versus the costs of joining that religion, such as time spent pursuing the religion and the possible sanctions against somebody who does not participate in the religion that is dominant in their community or culture.<sup>24</sup> There is also the “semi-involuntary thesis” where a religion is a large part of a person’s culture and is a part of their community’s tradition, such as marriage and age ceremonies, and where few incentives present themselves to convert to a different religion, what some would casually call a “cultural Catholic” in a strongly Catholic community or a cultural Muslim in a strongly Islamic community.<sup>25</sup> Ramos, Woodberry, and Ellison also explore the “national origin hypothesis,” examining how some countries have kept strong ties to Catholic religion and culture, such as Mexico, Panama, and the Dominican Republic in comparison to countries that have seen much larger spread and affiliation to Protestant denominations, such as Puerto Rico and Guatemala.<sup>26</sup> Hence, the hypothesis is that people from Catholic-dominant countries are more likely to be Catholic and immigrants from countries with large Protestant sects are more likely to be Protestant. Lastly, the “assimilation theory” explores if Latinos convert to Protestantism as a means of becoming more a part of the dominant U.S. culture as a means of assimilation or acculturation, and also as they face less barriers, especially in the second-generation and beyond, such as being able to speak English.<sup>27</sup> Now, getting to the results, Ramos, Woodberry, and Ellison found that Latinos living in an area with a high concentration of Latinos (historically being a Catholic-dominant community) did not correlate with less likelihood of conversion, which the semi-involuntary theory would predict due to social

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<sup>24</sup> Ramos, Woodberry, and Ellison, “Contexts of Conversion,” 120.

<sup>25</sup> Ramos, Woodberry, and Ellison, “Contexts of Conversion,” 121.

<sup>26</sup> Ramos, Woodberry, and Ellison, “Contexts of Conversion,” 122-123.

<sup>27</sup> Ramos, Woodberry, and Ellison, “Contexts of Conversion,” 124.

sanctioning and less incentives to switching in a Latino Catholic-dominant community.<sup>28</sup> Living in such a community, at least in the U.S., was no more or no less of a predictor for conversion. The only exception they found is in communities where Latino Protestants had an “early foothold” that a higher likelihood existed of Latino converts to Protestantism.<sup>29</sup> In regard to the national original hypothesis, they did find merit to this. For example, those of Puerto Rican ancestry (a place with much higher Protestant affiliation) were eight times more likely to be converts to Protestantism compared to those of Mexican ancestry, and Central Americans were two times more likely in comparison to Mexicans.<sup>30</sup> Regarding assimilation theory, English-speaking Latinos were three times more likely to be converts.<sup>31</sup> The study also found that first-generation Latinos were 45% less likely to be a lifelong Protestant in comparison to a third-generation Latino respondent.<sup>32</sup> One must keep in mind that the third-generation correspondent is the child of a second-generation Latino, where it is likely that the initial conversion happened and thereby produced a lifelong Protestant third-generation Latino.

It is important to understand that generations take on different dynamics and attributes throughout the years. With this in mind, Russell Jeung, Carolyn Chen, and Jerry Z. Park discuss the differences between pre-1965 second generation immigrants and post-1965 second generation immigrants.<sup>33</sup> They speak to the fact that the former was predominantly White,

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<sup>28</sup> Ramos, Woodberry, and Ellison, “Contexts of Conversion,” 140-141.

<sup>29</sup> Ramos, Woodberry, and Ellison, “Contexts of Conversion,” 136.

<sup>30</sup> Ramos, Woodberry, and Ellison, “Contexts of Conversion,” 136.

<sup>31</sup> Ramos, Woodberry, and Ellison, “Contexts of Conversion,” 136.

<sup>32</sup> Ramos, Woodberry, and Ellison “Contexts of Conversion,” 136.

<sup>33</sup> Russell Jeung, Carolyn Chen, and Jerry Z. Park, “Religious, Racial, and Ethnic Identities of the New Second Generation,” in *Sustaining Faith Traditions: Race, Ethnicity, and Religion among the Latino and Asian*

European, while the latter is now 45% Latino, 18% Asian, 5% other, and only 35% European or Canadian.<sup>34</sup> Moreover, building off Will Herberg's theory that an immigrant's national and ethnic identity would decline by the second generation and then their religion would become their primary source of social identity in the U.S.,<sup>35</sup> this theory was easier to actualize for White immigrants blending into a majority White society. Jeung, Chen, and Park propose that Herberg's theory does not prove true for this new population of second-generation immigrants who are majority non-White because their ethnicity and race play a larger role even into the second-generation lives, thereby creating situations where religion is not the primary social identity for a second-generation immigrant and a hybrid identity exists where both race and religion are dominant identity characteristics.<sup>36</sup> In this negotiation between race, religion, and ethnicity, Jeung, Chen, and Park propose four primary categories for which a second-generation identifies, or negotiates and lives their identity, being:

- 1. Religious primacy:** Individuals in this category prioritize religious identity over all others. Examples include Latino and Asian-American Evangelical Christians who belong to multi-ethnic congregations, Muslims whose primary identity is their religion, and Asian-American Jews whose religion takes priority as their dominant identity characteristic.<sup>37</sup>

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*American Second Generation*, ed. Carolyn Chen and Russell Jeung (New York: New York University Press, 2012), 1-22.

<sup>34</sup> Jeung, Chen, and Park, "Religious, Racial, and Ethnic Identities," 4.

<sup>35</sup> See Will Herberg, *Protestant, Catholic, Jew: An Essay in American Religious Sociology* (New York: Doubleday, 1983 [1955]).

<sup>36</sup> Jeung, Chen, and Park, "Religious, Racial, and Ethnic Identities," 3.

<sup>37</sup> Jeung, Chen, and Park, "Religious, Racial, and Ethnic Identities," 3, 12-13.

2. **Racialized religion:** In this category religion does not transcend race and ethnicity but rather reaffirms racial boundaries and even divisions among society created by racialized experiences of ethnic minorities in the United States. Latino and Black-based churches would fit this category.<sup>38</sup>
3. **Ethnoreligious hybridization:** In this category, second-generation ethnic groups create a hybrid religious experience that combines their ethnic identity with religious worship, traditions, and congregations. Korean-American Evangelicals and Filipino Catholics would fit this category. While similar to racialized religion, it is less a reaction to society's racialized boundaries and divisions and more a creation of new Americans (i.e. first-generation immigrants to the U.S.) adjustment to American society by means of creating local hybrid experiences that combine both their religion and ethnicity.<sup>39</sup>
4. **Familistic traditioning:** This category involves religious traditions that are customs and traditions of a particular culture, ethnicity, and nationality rather than formal religious groups or practices. Such traditions are carried with the first generation and passed along to the second generation. Practices in this category include Chinese popular religion, Vietnamese ancestral veneration, and Indian-American Hinduism, all of which are more family traditions associated with an ethnic group more so than formal religions.<sup>40</sup>

Jeung, Chen, and Park's analysis of this new post-1965 second-generation population, their rebuttal of Herberg's theory, and their categorization of religious practices relate to the U.S. Latino experience. For example, one could argue that Familistic Traditioning is occurring in the

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<sup>38</sup> Jeung, Chen, and Park, "Religious, Racial, and Ethnic Identities," 3, 14.

<sup>39</sup> Jeung, Chen, and Park, "Religious, Racial, and Ethnic Identities," 3, 15-16.

<sup>40</sup> Jeung, Chen, and Park, "Religious, Racial, and Ethnic Identities," 3, 17-18.

context of Latino “cultural Catholics,” being those that do not really attend church or even know the key differences between Catholicism versus Protestantism, but simply continue their Catholic faith since that has been the family tradition for centuries. Moreover, related to “Religious primary”, there are certainly proud Latino Evangelicals who would be glad to prioritize their Christian Evangelical identity over their ethnic identity. Regarding the four categories discussed by Jeung, Chen, and Park, my curiosity will lead toward exploring how these possibilities are translating and occurring (or not occurring) in the second-generation Latino context in the United States.

Certainly, being Latino in the U.S. can take various routes regarding religious and spiritual practices. Gerardo Martí gives light to a growing number of Latinos who leave ethnic-specific churches and instead choose to attend multi-cultural, English dominant churches.<sup>41</sup> He walks through a real-life example of Jose, a 36-year-old Mexican-American who was very much about “La Raza” and his Mexican-American heritage but chose to try something new via a very diverse church called Mosaic in Los Angeles.<sup>42</sup> Seeing every “color” in the church appealed to him, and it is even where he made his first Asian friend. He himself is a third-generation Latino who spoke little Spanish. While first finding comfort with other Latino congregants at Mosaic, he and his wife later enjoyed building close relationships with Asian, White, and Black congregants. Through a church that focused less on ethnicity and more on Christian identity, Jose’s ethnocentric identity diminished while his identity as a follower of Christ substantially increased (what Jeung, Chen, and Park would call a **Religious Primary**). With groups that

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<sup>41</sup> Gerardo Martí, “The Diversity-Affirming Latino,” in *Sustaining Faith Traditions: Race, Ethnicity, and Religion among the Latino and Asian American Second Generation*, ed. Carolyn Chen and Russell Jeung (New York: New York University Press, 2012), 25-45.

<sup>42</sup> Martí, “Diversity-Affirming Latino,” 25-26.

transcend racial and ethnic differences by focusing on their Christian identity, Martí coined the term “ethnic transcendent Latinos”.<sup>43</sup> By this, he means Latino individuals who are not seeking ethnocentric identity nor religion but rather “participate in congregations that encourage them to acknowledge their own ethnic-specific Latino heritage or panethnic Hispanic identity while simultaneously interacting with other ethnic/racial groups in a common religious setting.” This often leads to an identity centered on their religion rather than their ethnicity or race, while still being in a setting that does not ask them to forsake their ethnic identity, but rather welcomes it as one among various diverse congregants.

It appears that many of these ethnic transcendent Latinos may be involved in what I am calling *semi-shifts* in religious affiliation, shifts that I do not think are being captured in larger studies such as the Pew Research Center (2014) study.<sup>44</sup> By this I mean, for example, Latinos who shift from a Latino-based (and many times Spanish-speaking) Evangelical, Pentecostal, or non-denominational church to a multicultural and often English-speaking (or bilingual) Evangelical, Pentecostal, or non-denominational church. In these examples, Latinos are staying within the same overall religious identity or denomination, and hence would not be captured as a conversion in Pew’s survey. However, this does not mean that shifts in priorities and religious practices are not occurring, even if one does not change religious affiliation.

Martí later discusses how some Latinos speak Spanish, others Spanglish, some English only, others indigenous languages, Portuguese, and an array of other languages depending on the background of the Latino.<sup>45</sup> Some identify as Hispanic, others Chicano, some mestizo, mulatto,

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<sup>43</sup> Martí, “Diversity-Affirming Latino,” 26.

<sup>44</sup> Pew Research Center, “Shifting Religious Identity.”

<sup>45</sup> Martí, “Diversity-Affirming Latino,” 30.

by national origin (e.g. Mexican), or as simply American. Many Latinos consider themselves multi-racial, with examples such as Afro-Caribbean Latinos and Chinese-Peruvian Latinos. Many are Catholic, others Protestant, some Muslim, some atheist, and the list goes on through various religions and spiritual lifestyles. Martí makes the point that it is erroneous to consider all Latino-based congregations as the same due to all the diversity that exists within this broad term called *Latino*. He suggests that "...we approach Latino religious identity around the various ways ethnic identity interacts with religious involvement."<sup>46</sup> In other words, each Latino sub-group and individuals within that subgroup may all pursue religion and spirituality differently, so it is important not to generalize over the topic of Latino religion.

Lastly, in a slight difference to Jeung, Chen, and Park's four categories of religious identity, Gerardo Martí proposes three general categories for Latino religious identity:

1. **Ethnic-specific Latinos:** These are Latinos who participate in churches with heavy nationalistic identities, such as Mexican immigrant churches and Puerto Rican churches. These religious entities tend to adapt their religious home to fit ethnic-specific groups of one national origin.<sup>47</sup>
2. **Panethnic Latinos:** Latinos that participate in congregations that still cater toward their ethnic Latino identity but in a way that is inclusive of other Latino nationalities and cultures. Overall, the congregation remains predominantly Latino ethnic focused.<sup>48</sup>
3. **Ethnic Transcendent Latinos:** These are Latinos who live out their religious and spiritual life in congregations that are not Latino focused and hence would include

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<sup>46</sup> Martí, "Diversity-Affirming Latino," 32.

<sup>47</sup> Martí, "Diversity-Affirming Latino," 33.

<sup>48</sup> Martí. "Diversity-Affirming Latino," 33.



Latinos that interact with congregants that are not Latino. Their congregations often emphasize religious identity over ethnic identity. However, the congregation still often maintains a very inclusive and multicultural environment. This category would include Latinos like Jose in Los Angeles who attend the Mosaic church.<sup>49</sup>

Between Martí and Jeung, Chen, and Park then, one can see seven categories that describe various options toward pursuing both individual and congregational spiritual life and affiliation. All carry relevance and real-life examples to them and all should be kept in mind when studying Latino religion.

Jonathan E. Calvillo and Stanley R. Bailey speak to this very religious diversity within the Latino population.<sup>50</sup> They specifically delve into booming Latin American and U.S. Latino Evangelical and Pentecostal congregations, stating that the membership in these growing churches is mainly composed of converts or children of converts. This correlates with the U.S. Latino population being majority first and second-generation. Calvillo and Bailey also reiterate that most social scientists do not study Latin American Protestantism, leading to a critical research gap.<sup>51</sup>

Calvillo and Bailey continue to dive into Latino religious affiliation and identity by researching the growing number of conversions from Catholic to Protestant in the U.S. They state that there are two main factors contributing to this trend, being 1) what they call “unidirectional switching” in the U.S. from Catholic to Protestant, and 2) decreasing Catholic

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<sup>49</sup> Martí, “Diversity-Affirming Latino,” 34-36.

<sup>50</sup> Jonathan E. Calvillo and Stanley R. Bailey, “Latino Religious Affiliation and Ethnic Identity,” *Journal for the Scientific Study of Religion* 54, no. 1 (2015): 56-78, <https://doi.org/10.1111/jssr.12164>.

<sup>51</sup> Calvillo and Bailey, “Latino Religious Affiliation,” 76.

“hegemony” in Latin America.<sup>52</sup> They further explore the relationship between religion and ethnicity, stating that the increase in ethnic-based churches is a clear indicator of that relationship. They state that these churches can serve one of two roles, being that they either are a means for groups to maintain their ethnic customs, language, and solidarity, or they serve an “adaptive role” as they accompany ethnic populations along the journey of acculturation and eventual loss of ethnic attributes.<sup>53</sup>

With the ethnic attributes of Latinos in mind, Calvillo and Bailey make an argument for positive correlations between Catholics tending to be more tied to the native Spanish language and Protestants being more likely to prefer English in church and be English-dominant themselves. Moreover, they assert that ethnic churches “provide immigrants and their progeny protected spaces in which to find refuge, resources, and respect.”<sup>54</sup> In contrast, multi-ethnic, pan-ethnic, and integrated congregations promote strong religious identity alongside weakened ethnic identities. Now, with Catholic churches also being so strongly tied to tradition, national and local patron saints, and distinctive Virgin Mary’s for different countries and communities, Calvillo and Bailey assert that Catholicism is so strongly tied to homeland religion, origins, and language that leaving the Catholic church could mean cultural abandonment for Latinos within their families, creating situations where religious conversion can be seen as forsaking what a family stands for and believes.<sup>55</sup>

With this in mind, Calvillo and Bailey further discuss Latino and Latin American

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<sup>52</sup> Calvillo and Bailey, “Latino Religious Affiliation,” 57.

<sup>53</sup> Calvillo and Bailey, “Latino Religious Affiliation,” 57.

<sup>54</sup> Calvillo and Bailey, “Latino Religious Affiliation,” 65.

<sup>55</sup> Calvillo and Bailey, “Latino Religious Affiliation,” 61-62.

Evangelical and Pentecostal congregations and converts, stating that since Latinos in these denominations are either converts or children of converts, they have less of a deep “historical rootedness” and strong ties to a tradition, and instead are more “sacred-text-centered” practitioners of religion.<sup>56</sup> Hence, they tend to frown upon non-Bible-based traditions, such as Catholic Marian devotion. For them, the past is something that can be reformed, therefore ties to native countries and traditions are weaker and openness to a new host country and religious homes with new Scriptural devotional practices are welcome.

In their study, Calvillo and Bailey found that Catholics were 12 percent more likely to speak only Spanish at home when compared to Protestants.<sup>57</sup> They also found that nearly three times more Protestants spoke only English at home, being 14.7 percent Protestants compared to 5.7 percent Catholics.<sup>58</sup> Calvillo and Bailey believe that these figures would be even greater in difference between both groups if the sample size was not so heavy on first-generation immigrants, who tend to be dominant in their native language. Catholics also had deeper ties to their national origin by means of having national origin be one of their salient identities, while Protestants were more likely to have religion as their salient identity. As discussed, such ties to national origin and native language also come with strong ties to cultural and religious traditions. The survey Calvillo and Bailey utilized also found that 86 percent of Catholics display religious objects at home (e.g. such as Marian statues and images, a strong tradition in Latin America and Spain), while only 33 percent of Protestants do.<sup>59</sup> Lastly, the findings showed that those who

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<sup>56</sup> Calvillo and Bailey, “Latino Religious Affiliation,” 63.

<sup>57</sup> Calvillo and Bailey, “Latino Religious Affiliation,” 67.

<sup>58</sup> Calvillo and Bailey, “Latino Religious Affiliation,” 67.

<sup>59</sup> Calvillo and Bailey, “Latino Religious Affiliation,” 68.

attended ethnic churches (e.g. a Catholic or Pentecostal church that is Mexican immigrant-based) were significantly more likely to retain Spanish dominance or some level of Spanish language at home, thereby showing that attendance of an ethnic church positively correlate with Spanish retention at home.<sup>60</sup> In contrast, those who attended ethnically mixed churches were more likely to be English-dominant at home or were families on the path toward “English monolingualism” at home.<sup>61</sup> These dynamics of culture, language, national origin, and tradition show how complex the spirituality of Latinos can be.

Similarly to Calvillo and Bailey, researcher Gerardo Martí provides insight and direction into sociological research related to what he refers to as Latino Protestant Churches, or LPCs.<sup>62</sup> He states that research has shown that Latino Protestants have such a strong religious identity that is emphasized and prioritized first over ethnic identity, more so than for Latino Catholics. He also states that they tend to have higher rates of church attendance over White Protestants and Latino Catholics.<sup>63</sup> He goes on to state that limited scholarship exists on Latino Protestants and what does exist is over-reliant on empirical data rather than analyzing the dynamics of this population in a deeper manner.<sup>64</sup> Moreover, he cautions us not to overgeneralize Latino Protestants as one homogeneous group but rather that any future research “should avoid...racialized assumptions and use careful sampling, listening, and observation to pursue

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<sup>60</sup> Calvillo and Bailey, “Latino Religious Affiliation,” 66.

<sup>61</sup> Calvillo and Bailey, “Latino Religious Affiliation,” 71, 74.

<sup>62</sup> Gerardo Martí, “Latino Protestants and Their Congregations: Establishing an Agenda for Sociological Research,” *Sociology of Religion* 76, no. 2 (Summer 2015): 145-154, <https://doi.org/10.1093/socrel/srv016>.

<sup>63</sup> Martí, “Latino Protestants,” 146.

<sup>64</sup> Martí, “Latino Protestants,” 148.

dynamics and nuance among Latino Protestants and their churches.”<sup>65</sup> He advises future researchers to look into the variety in dynamics and activities such as worship style, singing, music used and deemed acceptable, preaching style, Bible readings, leadership structure, gender dynamics, decision-making, individual and congregational worship experiences, alongside other related activities. Aside from specific activities, Martí encourages inquiry into whether the LPC promotes and supports ethnic and racial identity or if it de-emphasizes it, and whether it promotes outreach to disadvantaged Latinos in the local community.<sup>66</sup>

Milagros Peña and Edwin I. Hernandez state how most studies on immigration focus on the first generation while not enough have been focused on the second and third generation, which continue to face similar issues faced by the first generation, alongside their own unique challenges.<sup>67</sup> They also discuss how the Latino ministries that revolve around community activism and “faith in action” tend to better attract and retain the second-generation. In other words, these are ethnic and pan-ethnic faith-based organizations that do not simply serve as substitutes for ethnicity nor simply incorporate culture into religious practice, they add a key layer of social activism, which is important for many in the second generation.

One example is the Latino Pastoral Action Center (LPAC) in New York City.<sup>68</sup> They are a ministry network that advocates for immigrant rights, builds their own schools that can communicate to parents in Spanish, provides social services directly to families, and provides

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<sup>65</sup> Martí, “Latino Protestants,” 149.

<sup>66</sup> Martí, “Latino Protestants,” 150.

<sup>67</sup> Milagros Peña and Edwin I. Hernandez, “Second-Generation Latin@ Faith Institutions and Identity Formations,” in *Sustaining Faith Traditions: Race, Ethnicity, and Religion among the Latino and Asian American Second Generation*, ed. Carolyn Chen and Russell Jeung (New York: New York University Press, 2012), 93-112.

<sup>68</sup> For more information, contact: Latino Pastoral Action Center, Inc., 14 West 170th Street, Bronx, NY 10452, (718) 681-2361, <https://www.lpacnyc.com/>.

positive recreational activities for youth. In other words, they are “social ministries that are rooted in a faith in action deeply embedded in Latin@ ethnic identity and religious values.”<sup>69</sup> They cite pastors who refer to a “holistic” approach to ministry, being that they focus both on spiritual needs and also social, economic, political, and cultural needs of the community. They note that although some of the second generation are pushed out of their neighborhoods due to gentrification or leave by their own choice, many stay or come back to their Latino faith-based organization in the neighborhood to continue the opportunity to engage with their community and culture.<sup>70</sup> So, while Martí’s research demonstrates how many second and third-generation Latinos are moving away from ethnic-Latino and pan-ethnic-Latino churches toward ethnic transcendent churches, Peña and Hernandez show us examples of how faith-based organizations involved in social activism can be models for engaging the first, second, and third generation.

For a view into assessing Latino spirituality at a deeper level rather than solely their religious affiliation, we analyze the work of Thalia MacMillan and Naelys Luna who explore assessments of spirituality with a particular lens on Latino college students.<sup>71</sup> They focus on the scientific assessment of these topics and state that “spirituality can encompass emotional, cognitive, affective, and behavioral forms of expression.”<sup>72</sup> They further state that while “religion” is tied to formalized religion, spirituality does not have to be associated with such. They go into the different assessments used in the last few decades to study both religion and

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<sup>69</sup> Peña and Hernandez, “Second-Generation Latin@ Faith Institutions,” 98.

<sup>70</sup> Peña and Hernandez, “Second-Generation Latin@ Faith Institutions,” 102, 105.

<sup>71</sup> Thalia MacMillan and Naelys Luna, “A Confirmatory Factor Analysis of the Spiritual Transcendence Index: Assessing Spirituality in a Sample of Latino College Students,” *Mental Health, Religion & Culture* 19, no. 5 (March 2016): 464-475, <https://doi.org/10.1080/13674676.2016.1155207>.

<sup>72</sup> MacMillan and Luna, “Confirmatory Factor Analysis,” 464.

spirituality, such as the Spiritual Assessment Inventory (SAI), the Spiritual Well-Being Scale (SWBS), and the Transcendence Scale.<sup>73</sup> These assessments look into feelings of purpose in life, relationship to God, prayer life, connectedness, view of life, and other components, many of which are tied to formal religious practice and mainstream theistic beliefs, while others are related to the practice and conceptual elements of spirituality.

MacMillan and Luna then describe how their study used the Spiritual Transcendence Index (STI), which “omits reference to formal religion and [...] accommodates different conceptualizations of spirituality.”<sup>74</sup> It is an instrument that seeks to capture one’s level of spirituality and belief in a higher power regardless of religious orientation. They further state how the STI has not been used much on the Latino population, so they seek to see how the instrument works with this population, as they state that it is important to consider a person’s culture in relation to their spirituality. They utilized a pool of research participants who took the STI at three public universities across the northeast and southeast in the U.S., all being psychology or social work students.<sup>75</sup> Out of 1352 students who took the STI, 593 were Latino. It is important to note that out of the 593 Latinos, 53.2% were Dominican, 23.9% were Puerto Rican, only 2.5% were Mexican or Chicano, .5% were Cuban, and 19.8% identified as other.<sup>76</sup> This does not parallel population rates of the overall Latino population in the U.S., which is the majority of Mexican heritage (native and foreign-born), and also has a growing Central American population, so this study had an overrepresentation of Caribbean Latinos. Moreover,

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<sup>73</sup> MacMillan and Luna, “Confirmatory Factor Analysis,” 465.

<sup>74</sup> MacMillan and Luna, “Confirmatory Factor Analysis,” 465.

<sup>75</sup> MacMillan and Luna, “Confirmatory Factor Analysis,” 467.

<sup>76</sup> MacMillan and Luna, “Confirmatory Factor Analysis,” 469.

approximately three-fourths of the Latino student participants were female and about 25% were male. Lastly, about 60% were second-generation and beyond, while about 40% were first-generation.

MacMillan and Luna found that among the college Latinos assessed, level of spirituality and believing in God's presence were highly correlated.<sup>77</sup> Furthermore, most participants considered themselves to be both spiritual and religious. Moreover, when comparing ethnic groups among all participants, Latino, Asian, and African-American college students had significantly higher levels of spirituality in comparison to their White peers within the study. MacMillan and Luna state that these findings may suggest that "spirituality is socially constructed, with each ethnic group having their own meaning regarding spirituality."<sup>78</sup> Moreover, they state that the STI as an assessment seems to work well with different ethnic groups, as it seems to allow for individualized definitions of spirituality more so than other assessments.<sup>79</sup> Lastly, they suggest that spirituality needs to be included as an important factor of one's culture when counseling practitioners treat their clients in a way that is sensitive and inclusive of their cultural attributes. Their study provides helpful insight into how spirituality can be assessed over religious affiliation. However, I think the emphasis on "assessing" spirituality versus exploring spirituality by empowering and amplifying the voice of the ones being studied still needs to be further explored in a way that provides ample opportunity for the participant to formulate their own beliefs, practices, and spiritual journey in their own words. This qualitative exploration could include one's desire to grow spirituality, what kind of help or guidance one

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<sup>77</sup> MacMillan and Luna, "Confirmatory Factor Analysis," 472.

<sup>78</sup> MacMillan and Luna, "Confirmatory Factor Analysis," 473.

<sup>79</sup> MacMillan and Luna, "Confirmatory Factor Analysis," 473.



would like in their spiritual journey, and what a spiritual leader can do for them in relation to their spiritual journey. While this may be more qualitative and less formal than an assessment intended to analyze religion and spirituality, it nonetheless explores further into the core of the spirituality of the participants, which in my study below, will be second-generation and 1.5 generation Latinos.

## Research Study Overview & Methodology

### Introduction to the Findings

As mentioned in my introduction, my intention is to conduct new and innovative research into the religious affiliation trends and spiritual care desires of second-generation Latinos in the United States. As one can see, there have been few comprehensive studies in the 21<sup>st</sup> century on these topics, the primary examples being the Pew Research Center studies in 2007 and 2014.<sup>80</sup> Moreover, these Pew studies, like many others, did not focus solely on examining and understanding the 2<sup>nd</sup> and 1.5 generation, but rather focused on Latinos in general (though some break-out generational data is acknowledged). Additionally, none of these studies approached the matter from a qualitative exploration of the spiritual journey, practices, and desires of participants.

My intention is not only to examine religious trends (with new data obtained in 2021 from surveys conducted with 2<sup>nd</sup>- and 1.5-generation Latinos across the nation) but to also allow for the space in my survey that can amplify the voices of these demographics as it relates to examining and understanding the spiritual practices and desires for these groups that we acknowledge are also not homogeneous monoliths but as unique individuals that in some circumstance may have majority trends and in others may not. With this direct qualitative input, the hope would be that greater insight would be given to religious institutions, organizations, leaders, and spiritual care providers so that they can better tend to and address the spiritual care needs of 2<sup>nd</sup>- and 1.5-generation Latinos in our most modern context, while also contributing to this field of study and lifting up the voices of this demographics when it comes to their religious and spiritual practices. Moreover, it will ideally help to develop better services and opportunities

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<sup>80</sup> Pew Research Center, “Shifting Religious Identity.”

for them to grow spiritually.

### **Survey Methodology**

An online survey was created via the Alchemer (formerly SurveyGizmo) software. The survey captured the state of residence of the participant and then jumped into twenty questions that were a mix of single-choice questions, check-all-that-apply (CATA) questions, rated closed-survey questions single choice, and open-ended questions. The initial five questions related to capturing the participant's heritage, religious affiliation during their upbringing and their current affiliation, their age generation and then their immigrant generation (i.e. whether 1.5 or 2<sup>nd</sup>-generation Latino). The next five questions delved into what differences may exist between the participant's upbringing (i.e. embedded) religious practices and their current ones, alongside asking about preference on language for religious services, preferred ethnicity for their religious leadership, preference on congregational ethnic make-up, and what activities keep them engaged in their spiritual home (if applicable).

The next five questions involve two sets of rated closed-end survey questions that explore the importance of the participant's spiritual life in comparison to other aspects of their life and also rating how important it is for them to grow spiritually in the future. This is followed by two check-all-that-apply (CATA) questions that explore the values important to the participants regarding their spiritual home and the type of religious or spiritual services (e.g. worship services) that they prefer. This is then followed by an open-ended question on whether the participant attends religious services at locations other than their own spiritual home on occasion.

The last five questions start with a single-choice question on frequency of attendance at one's spiritual home followed by four open-ended questions that explore if: 1) there is anything the participant would change or add to their current spiritual home, 2) any possible negative

events from that past related to a spiritual home that has affected the participant's spiritual journey or religious engagement, if willing and as much as one is willing to share, 3) how a religious or spiritual leader could outreach to and support the participant from the participant's perspective, and 4) how a religious or spiritual home or entity outreach to and support the participant in their spiritual journey from their participant's perspective.

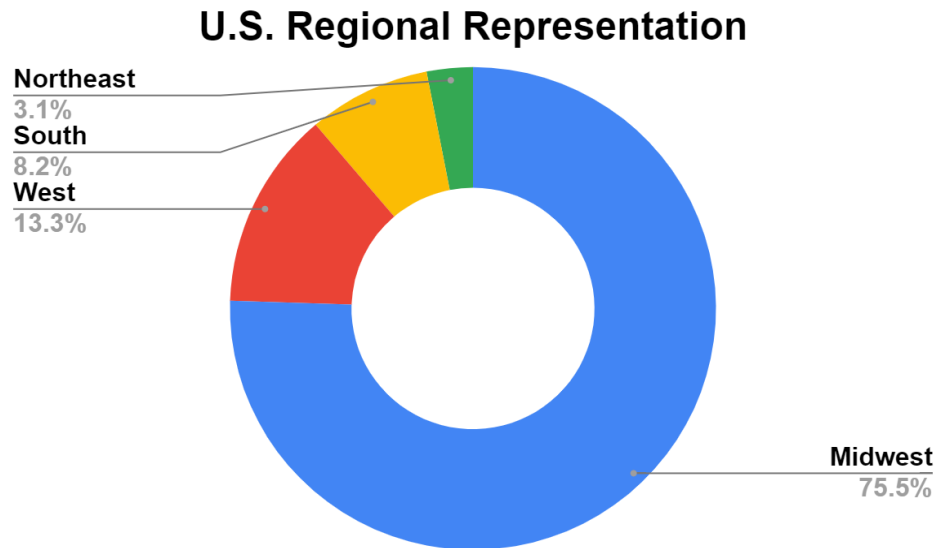
## Results

### Participant State & Regional Representation

Through the online survey method, I was able to capture 274 completed surveys between the period of May 2021 to July 2021. All met the parameters of 2<sup>nd</sup>- or 1.5-generation Latino and being from Gen Z, Millennial, or Generation X. In relation to representation from U.S. states, participants represented twenty-three total states and the District of Columbia. Out of these twenty-four locations, the top eight represented were Arizona, California, Colorado, Florida, Illinois, Nebraska, New York, and Texas, all of which coincide with largely Hispanic/Latino-populated states in the United States with a slight anomaly being Nebraska; this state received high representation due to it being the resident state of the researcher in which many networks and contacts of the researcher's state were used to reach the target demographic.

Arizona	Iowa	New Mexico
California	Kansas	New York
Colorado	Kentucky	Pennsylvania
Illinois	Michigan	Virginia
Florida	Minnesota	Tennessee
Georgia	Missouri	Texas
Idaho	Nebraska	Washington
Indiana	Nevada	Washington DC

The states in the chart above have associated colors related to U.S. Federal Census regions, orange being the West, yellow for the Midwest, blue for the Northeast, and green for the South. The chart showcases the percentages related to quantitative totals of participants per census region. Out of 274 participants, 75.5% were from states in the Midwest, 13.3% were from states in the West, 8.2% were from states in the South, and 3.1% were from states in the Northeast.



### Heritage of Participants

In relation to heritage, there were eighteen (18) total Latin American countries of heritage represented by participants. The highest representation was Mexican heritage (2<sup>nd</sup> generation), including individuals born in Mexico (1.5 generation), at 67.34% of all survey participants. The next highest came from the “Northern Triangle” of El Salvador at 8.42%, Guatemala at 5.39%, and Honduras at 3.70%. Other countries with representation from Central America included Costa Rica, Nicaragua, and Panama. Total Central American representation was 19.19%. South America had the third largest representation at 9.10%, with Brazil coming highest at 3.37% followed by seven other South American countries that were represented. Lastly, Caribbean representation came in at 4.38%, with Puerto Rican representation at 1.68% of all participants, Cuban at 2.36%, and Dominican at .34%. Detailed heritage representation can be found in the chart below.

Mexican	67.34%	<b>67.34%</b>
Puerto Rican	1.68%	<b>4.38%</b>
Cuban	2.36%	
Dominican	0.34	

Salvadoran	8.42%	<b>19.19%</b>
Honduran	3.70%	
Guatemalan	5.39%	
Costa Rican	0.67	
Nicaraguan	0.67	
Panamanian	0.34	
Brazilian	3.37%	<b>9.10%</b>
Venezuelan	1.01%	
Colombian	1.01%	
Peruvian	1.35%	
Chilean	1.01%	
Argentinian	0.34	
Ecuadorian	0.67	
Paraguayan	0.34	

### **Ethnic Identity of Participants**













Now, we delve into a topic that can be a very contested matter of preference, opinion, or adamant belief related to how individuals with Latin American heritage identify themselves in relation to ethnic identification and specifically those living in the United States. This research survey allowed participants to choose how they identify themselves, and participants were allowed to choose more than one term out of ten commonly used terms and also up to two “other” options that participants could fill in for the question. Hence, participants had full liberty to choose or write-in their own term(s).

Coming in as the highest utilized term is the variation of “Latino” or “Latina” which came in at 82.1% of all participants. From there, we see “Hispanic” come in at a somewhat distant but nonetheless strong showing of 49.6% of all nationwide participants. Further down the results we see both “Nation of my heritage” and “Mexican-American” come in at about 30% for both categories. The “Nation of my heritage” would involve somebody saying I am “Mexican”, “Salvadoran”, or “Cuban”, for example, for their ethnic identifying term based on their heritage

(as opposed to simply saying I am “Latino”). This would involve individuals that were born in the United States but identify with their heritage for their ethnic identifying term or a 1.5 generation Latino who uses their county of birth for their ethnic identifying term. This is similar to those who utilize “Mexican-American” for those who combine their Mexican heritage with the fact that they are born in the United States of America; and this term, alongside ones like Chicano, being a intricate component of Latino history in the United States given the long history of Mexican migration into the United States for over a century, the fact that a sizable portion of the United States used to be Mexico, the history of the Chicano Movement in the United States, and other interwoven historical intricacies that exist between the United States and Mexico.

The more modern term “Latinx” came in at 14.5% of all nationwide participants within this 2<sup>nd</sup>- and 1.5-generation Latino demographic. The even more recently promoted term of “Latine” was also polled with Latine coming in at 2.3% utilization amongst participants. Between “Indigenous”, “Mayan”, and “Native”, these indigenous related terms combined came in at 7.2% utilization among participants - an indicator I would say that shows a notable growth in affinity for Indigenous culture and heritage among younger generation (Z through X) Latinos. The term “American” by itself came in at 14.1%, a smaller but sizable percentage among participants that may want to affiliate themselves primarily or solely with their home or native country of the United States of America instead of (or in addition to) using a term like *Latino* or *Hispanic*, perhaps for the purpose of assimilation into majority culture, or perhaps simply pride in being U.S. born citizen. These data points provide cultural insight into ethnic identification in this moment in history.



Value		Percent
Latino / Latina		82.1%
Latinx		14.5%
Latine		2.3%
Hispanic / Hispano		49.6%
Indigenous		5.3%
American		14.1%
Nationality of my heritage (Mexican, Honduran, Cuban, Puerto Rican, etc.)		29.8%
Chicano / Chicana		11.5%
Mexican-American		30.5%
Mayan / Comunidad Maya		1.9%
<a href="#">Other - Write In (click to view)</a>		4.6%
<a href="#">Other - Write In (click to view)</a>		0.8%

## Age Generation

Next, we delve into the age cohort of participants of this study as it relates to Generation X (1965 - 1980), the Millennial generation (1981 - 1996) and Gen Z (1997 onward). Since these generation and year timeframes can range slightly depending on the polling source, I went with the Pew Research Center timeframes for age generations as a means for having set parameters.<sup>81</sup>

I also kept adult participants within the 2<sup>nd</sup> and 1.5 generation limited to the three most recent generations as opposed to also going into the Baby Boomer generation and beyond in age

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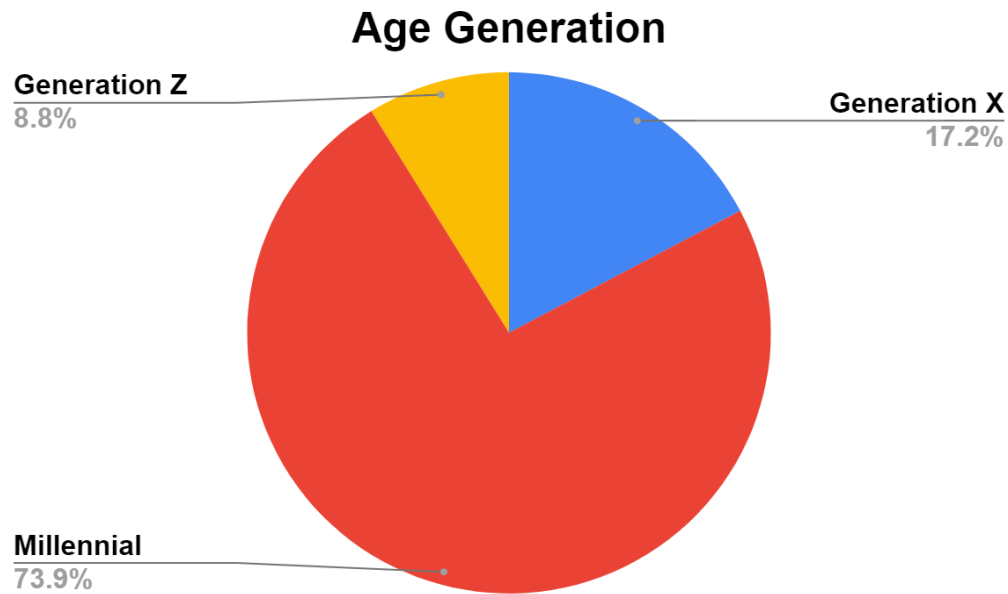
<sup>81</sup> Michael Dimock, “Defining Generations: Where Millennials End and Generation Z Begins,” Pew Research Center, January 17, 2019, <https://www.pewresearch.org/fact-tank/2019/01/17/where-millennials-end-and-generation-z-begins/>.

and generation. This was done to intentionally survey the most recent age generations of Latino 2<sup>nd</sup>/1.5 generation, in part following the logic of Jeung, Chen, and Park who discussed the differences that exist between pre-1965 second generation immigrants and post-1965 second generation immigrants.<sup>82</sup> I focused on this post-1965 demographic of 2<sup>nd</sup>/1.5-generation Latinos which conveniently coincides with the 1965 commencement of Generation X.

Amongst all 274 completed surveys, 17.2% were from Generation X, 73.9% were Millennials, and 8.8% were Gen Z. That middle adult Millennial age group ranging from about 25 to 40 years old at this moment encompasses that young adult age group born to immigrant parents that is often seen as the common second-generation Latino who is coming into their fruition in society currently as it relates to religious choices and changes and also that career and educational advancement that is often seen when first-generation parents come to this country to provide for a better life for their children. These children can be native-born U.S. citizens born in the U.S. after that first-generation immigrated, or sometimes it's a 1.5-generation child that was brought to the U.S. by their first-generation parent or a family member that nonetheless grew up in the U.S. and hence has similar attributes to the second generation due to both having an upbringing as children in the U.S. Below is the age generation percentages of survey participants.

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<sup>82</sup> Jeung, Chen, and Park, "Religious, Racial, and Ethnic Identities," 4.



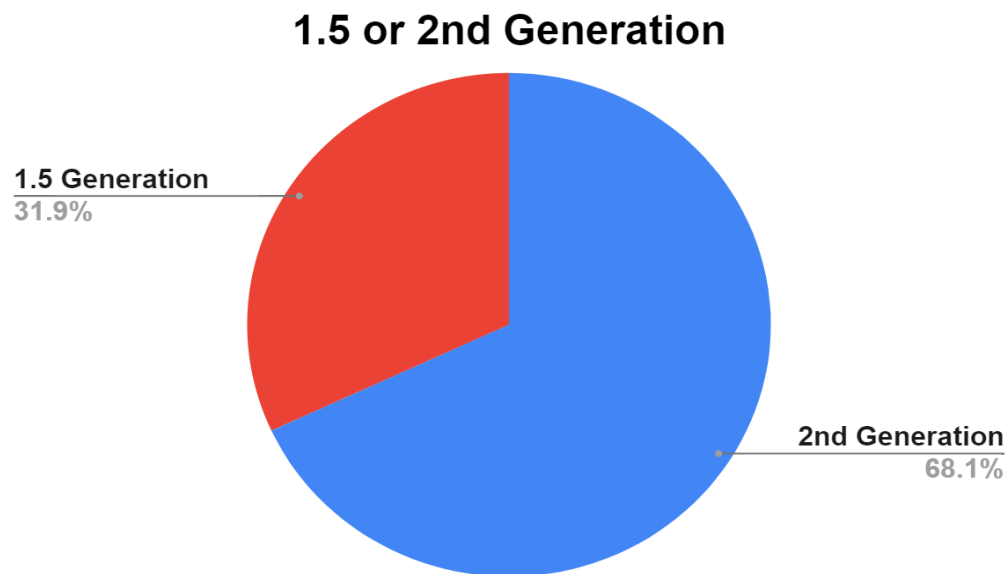
### Immigrant Generation

Immigrant generation is different from age cohort as it relates to which generation initially came to the United States from their native country to make the U.S. their new home (i.e. the first-generation), as well as the children who were born in the U.S. to the first-generation immigrant (the children then being second generation), and the children of the second generation then becoming the third generation that derived from the first-generation immigrant. Given the centuries of immigration to the United States, these categories can happen within any age group; an 80-year-old could be second generation as could be a 19-year-old. Hence, a part of my aforementioned reasoning to focus on second generations that were born 1965 and beyond.

The 1.5 generation comes into play between the adults who are immigrating to the U.S. (as first generation) and the children born to the first generation that in turn become the second generation. A member of the 1.5 generation is neither an adult that immigrated to the U.S. nor a child born in the U.S. to immigrant parents, yet they share similar attributes to the second generation. A 1.5 generation immigrant was brought over to the U.S. as a child but had an

upbringing in the United States and hence was influenced by the same U.S. society while growing up in the U.S. as a second generation would be who was born here. However, the 1.5 generation was born in a foreign country just like their first-generation parents were, sharing attributes with the first-generation related to being familiar with a foreign country, likely having the language of that foreign country as their native language, and in many cases having a recollection of the journey to migrate to the U.S. Hence, the 1.5 generation is in a way in-between both generations, though my inclusion of them in this survey was in a part a theory that the 1.5 generation, with their upbringing in the U.S., would demonstrate similar religious and spiritual affiliation trends and likely would be seeking similar attributes to their religious and spiritual journey; a finding we explore further in this paper.

Of all participants, 68.1% were 2<sup>nd</sup>-generation immigrants and 31.9% were 1.5 generation immigrants. The chart below captures this split in immigrant generation demographics.

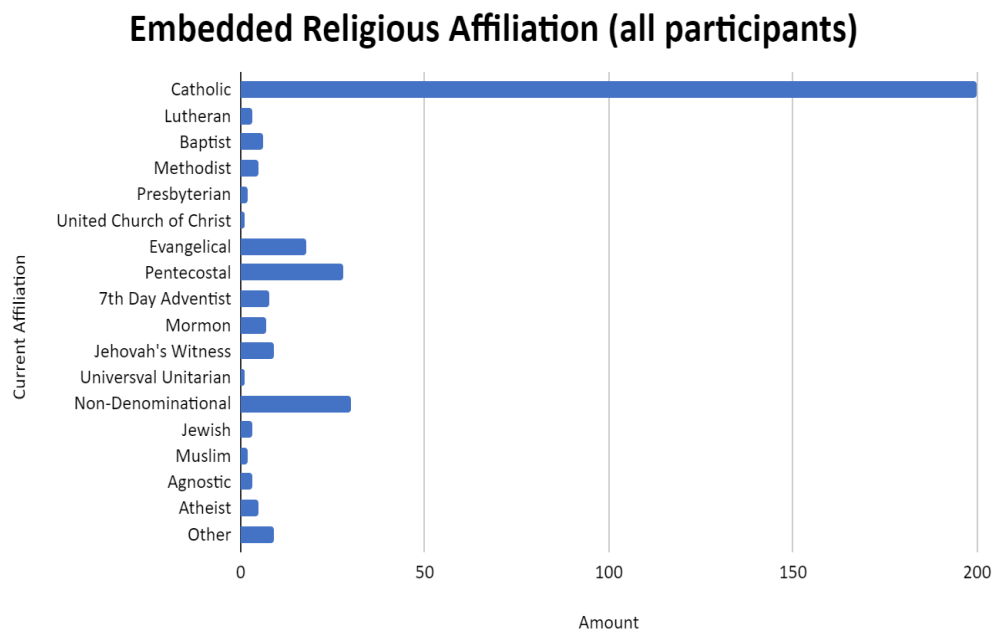


## Embedded Theology

An individual's religious upbringing is also referred to as their embedded theology.

Within my survey, participants were allowed to choose more than one option if by chance their family switched religion's during one's upbringing or if they grew up in an upbringing where each parent had a different affiliation from the other parent.

In the case of all of our participants, 76.3% stated that they were raised Roman Catholic, followed by non-denominational Christian at 11.1%, Pentecostal at 10.3%, and Evangelical at 6.9%. The next largest are non-mainstream Christian denominations that gained higher percentages than mainstream Protestant denominations, with 3.4% Jehovah's Witnesses, 3.1% were 7th Day Adventist, and 2.7% Mormon versus Baptist at 2.3%, Methodist at 1.9%, Lutheran at 1.1%, and Presbyterian at .8%. Agnostics came in at 1.1% and Atheist at 1.1% as well for a combined 2.2% Agnostic and Atheist affiliations which out measure virtually all mainstream Christian Protestants. The graph below shows total quantitative responses (keep in mind respondents could choose more than one option if applicable).



## **Current Religious Affiliation**

The follow-up question to embedded theology was asking about the participant's current religious affiliation, and here we see dramatic changes occurring within this demographic.

Starting with Catholic affiliation, it went from 76.3% who grew up Catholic to 43.3% who now affiliate with being Catholic. Non-denominational Christian went from 11.1% embedded affiliation to 19.9% current affiliation. Pentecostals went down from 10.3% to 5.0% while Evangelicals had a smaller decline from 6.9% to 6.5%.

Out of all the three non-mainstream Christian denominations that had higher percentages than mainstream Protestant denominations within the embedded theology question, only 7th Day Adventist maintained an edge, going from 3.1% down to 2.3%. Jehovah's Witness, which had the highest lead at 3.4%, saw the biggest decline down to .4%. Lastly, Mormon affiliation went from 2.7% down to .8%.

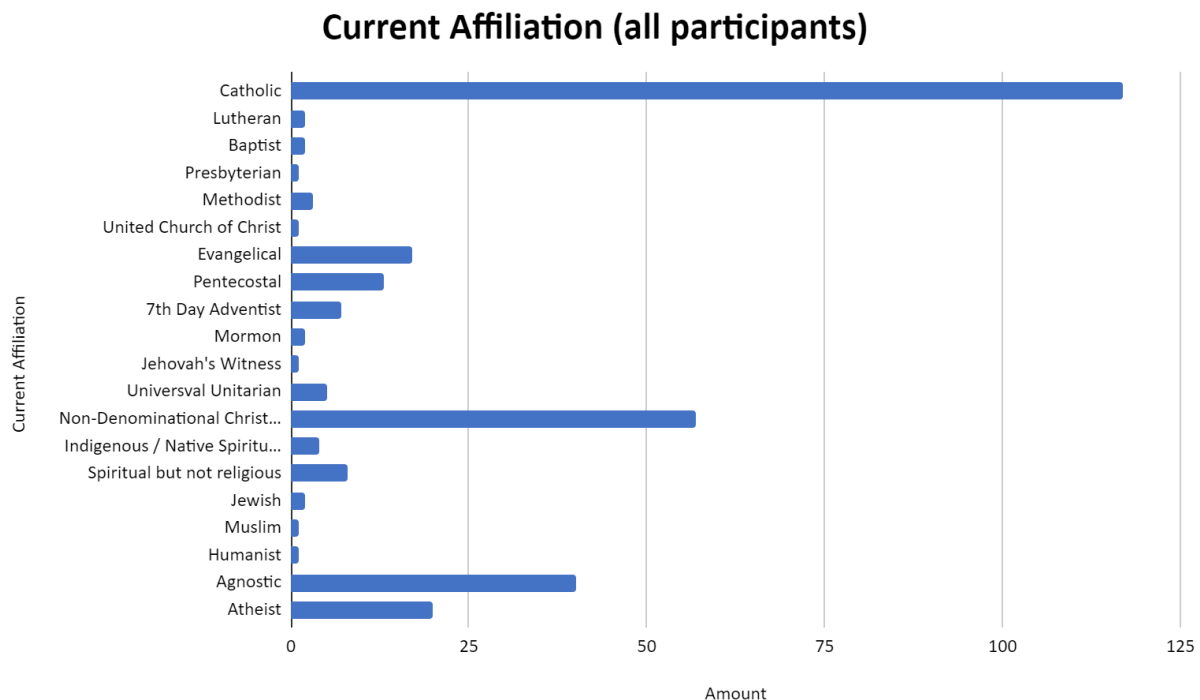
All mainstream Protestant had a drop in affiliation. Baptist went from 2.3% to .8%, Methodist from 1.9% to 1.1%, Lutheran from 1.1% to .8%, and Presbyterian from .8% to .4%. To give some context in relation to percentage versus persons represented, .4% represents one individual within the national survey that marked a specific affiliation and .8% would be two individuals who marked a specific affiliation.

Agnostics and Atheists saw a substantial increase in affiliation, with Atheist going from 1.1% in embedded theology up to 6.1% in current affiliation. Agnostics saw an even larger increase from 1.1% embedded theology up to 14.9% in current affiliation. Combined, both were only 2.2% in affiliation for embedded theology while now they represent 21% of self-identified affiliation among 2<sup>nd</sup>- and 1.5-generation Latinos.

Jewish affiliation went down from 1.1% (3 participants) to .8%. Muslim affiliation went

from .8% to .4%. Unitarians went up from .4% to 1.9% (5 participants). Another minority affiliation worth noting is that in the “other” category 1.5% (4 participants) affiliated themselves with indigenous and/or native spirituality.

The graph below shows total quantitative responses to current religious affiliation.



Now, how does this 2021 survey compare to the 2013 data from the 2014 Pew Research Survey regarding the question of current religious affiliation?<sup>83</sup> In relation to Catholic affiliation, the Pew survey held Latino survey participants (all generations) at 55% Catholic affiliation while my survey measured Latino participants (2<sup>nd</sup> and 1.5 generation only) at 43.3%, showcasing a continuing trend in reduced Catholic affiliation among Latinos, especially within the younger generations.

The Pew study had mainstream Protestants at 5% while my study saw them at 3.5% to

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<sup>83</sup> Pew Research Center, “Shifting Religious Identity.”

include Methodists, Baptists, Lutherans, Presbyterians, and United Church of Christ (UCC) affiliations cited by participants. The Pew study also had Evangelicals at 16% (all generations) while my study saw Evangelicals at 6.5% (2<sup>nd</sup> and 1.5 generation only), seeing a dramatic decrease in Evangelical affiliation amongst the younger generation between the two studies.

### **Participant Feedback on Changes Between Embedded Theology Versus Current Affiliation**

Participants were asked to describe in their own words (through an open-ended question) the changes, if any, that occurred between their religious upbringing (i.e. embedded theology) and their current religious affiliation and spiritual practices. The exact question was, “How would you describe your religious practices from childhood compared to your current religious or spiritual practices? Was there any change or conversion along the way?”

Of the 274 completed surveys, 242 participants chose to answer this question (all questions were optional). Of those 242, 8 participants (or 3%) provided insufficient data to assess the affiliation change from childhood to adulthood, hence the 3% in the data below that are marked as “insufficient data”. The 234 participants provided sufficient data to assess the affiliation change (or lack thereof) of the participant and led me to creating the following nine (9) categories related to religious affiliation change and spiritual practice choice. The narrative below will describe each category, the associated number of participants that fall into each category and give quoted examples for each category taken directly from survey participants.

#### **Category 1: No Affiliation Change (18% of participants)**

These are individuals that specifically note that their religious affiliation or spiritual practice from childhood is still the same in adulthood without any mention of seeking any kind of major or minor shift in theology or spiritual home practices. These individuals are consciously and intentionally engaged in their religious or spiritual practice that they cite have remained



consistent from childhood to adulthood.

- 1. Example Participant 1:** “I was brought up Catholic and have continued to proudly practice my faith and pass it down to my children. The older I have become, the more I have embraced my faith and have grown a deeper desire to grow closer to God.”
- 2. Example Participant 2:** “My wife and I were raised to be devout Catholic, and still to this day we both are very much so. We have raised our daughters to be Catholic and have had them baptized and had/have them making all their sacraments. I would say my wife and I have become even more religious as we have gotten older.”
- 3. Example Participant 3:** “Parents both spiritual with Hindu influence, also accepted other religions positively. I am also very spiritual and believe in a higher power that is not and will not be defined.”

A large majority within the “No Affiliation Change” category cited growing up Catholic and still being Catholic, while a smaller set cited Evangelical or Pentecostal upbringings and an even smaller set, like “Participant 3” above cited other spiritual practices related to agnosticism and more fluid spirituality as it relates to what they practiced growing up and keeping that same practice now as an adult.

#### **Category 2: Circle Back to Embedded Theology (4% of participants)**

These individuals are very similar to “No Affiliation Change” in that they still practice the religion of their upbringing. However, the difference here is that they specifically cited going through a journey or time of either exploring other denominations or religion practices or having disengaged from religion for a period. Then, after this exploration or disengagement, they have “circled back” to the affiliation or practice of their upbringing and childhood (embedded theology).

1. **Example Participant 1:** “Raised to obey the Catholic teachings. Once I was confirmed I pulled away from the Church. When in college I visited different churches to find the right fit for me. Fast forward to being engaged and my, now wife, wanted to align in a religion. We chose Catholicism due to my inclination towards our customs. Since then I’ve been closer to the church and am thankful for it. It was my choice, not forced upon me (this time).”
2. **Example Participant 2:** “My parents were religious but not extremist. We went to church every Sunday and participated in the big holidays. During college I kind of stopped, but after college and working a corporate job, I started to go back to church and pray and practice more religious activities during the holidays.”
3. **Example Participant 3:** “As a child I was forced to go to church and attend classes to receive my sacraments. There was a change as I went into college because I stopped going to church. Now as an adult I feel like I understand church better and go because I want to not because I have to.”

For many of our participants and people in general, a journey of theological and spiritual exploration is common. For participants in the “Circle Back” category, they went through such an explorative journey and made their way back to the religious affiliation or spiritual practice of their upbringing.

### **Category 3: Semi-Shift (15% of participants)**

These individuals did not express a blatant disregard or substantial change between their current religious affiliation or practice compared to that of their upbringing. Rather, they expressed some kind of “semi-shift” from their religious upbringing where they are still specifically or loosely affiliated to their affiliation as a child but with intentional shifts toward

slightly different practices, such as finding a church within the same denominational umbrella that is less strict/legalistic or they themselves still being in the denominational umbrella but individually being more open-minded on certain traditional or legalistic viewpoints. These individuals have not joined a new religion or dramatically different spiritual practice, but rather remain in the same sphere of theological belief.

- 1. Example Participant 1:** “I still hold the same beliefs however I interpret the Holy Bible differently compared to past churches where I once went to.”
- 2. Example Participant 2:** “I grew up in a very conservative household. Where even bright nail polish was seen as scandalous. I was taught to be humble and never to bring a lot of attention to myself, because the goal was to bring attention to God. My ideas of religious practices changed a lot when I moved to the U.S. Not only because I was a teenager, but because the church here was more inclusive of all people. I felt that my actions and the way I treated others mattered more to God than anything else. That came with the understanding of God's love for me and sharing that with others. Leaving behind all the ‘silly’ traditions I was taught when I was a child, that didn't really make sense to me anymore.”
- 3. Example Participant 3:** “I would describe my religious practices from my childhood as blindly following and also not understanding the importance of building a relationship with Jesus. Currently I feel like I question a lot, but I feel comfortable questioning and have grown in my faith more because of it. I also have realized the importance of praying and worship. I wouldn't say I've had a conversion, but I have definitely changed some of my beliefs about certain things. What led to these changes were some of the classes I took in school that challenged my beliefs. At the time I was also attending bible studies

with InterVarsity and so the way the bible studies approached reading the Bible helped me approach the questions that were challenging my faith.”

The semi-shifters have not renounced their religious upbringing outright but rather are seeking a semi-shift(s) in the religious or spiritual practice of their upbringing, such as being more open-minded about strict or legalistic rules and views, being open to women in leadership, being more inclusive of the LGBT community, or are looking for a church under the same umbrella of their embedded theology but one that is more ethnically diverse or progressive on social issues.

Categories 1 through 3 have either a direct or looser devotion or affinity to the religious affiliation of their upbringing. Altogether, these three categories with ties to their upbringing/embedded theology makeup 37% of survey participants, or slightly over one-third.

#### **Category 4: Coerced Affiliation (.41% of participants)**

These individuals are forced to practice a certain religion, in part or fully, and have some level of affiliation with a particular religion against their will. The individual does not feel like they have a choice in the matter and if they were to defy the coercion toward a religion placed upon them by another, they would face substantial consequences that currently prevent them from taking that step away from their undesired affiliation or religious practice.

- 1. Category Example 1:** “I don't have a choice under their roof. I've been living with them my entire life and they've forced me to live by their methods of practice when it comes to religion even though I've been clear that I am not Catholic. Back then I would pray a lot and worship outside of church, but it wasn't until my junior and senior year of high school that I realized those beliefs aren't mine. Nowadays we just argue every Sunday about going to mass, but I have to end up going either way because they'll make me go to confession the next week or have me go twice.”

Even though only one participant fell under this category, the situation was too unique to not give its own category. The participant captured, and potentially others in similar situations, are likely in the Gen Z category, a very young adult still living under the roof/housing of their parent and feels intense pressure to practice a certain religion solely to please the individual placing overbearing pressure upon them to continue to affiliate or practice in a certain way.

**Category 5: Denominational Duality (1% of participants)**

These individuals have a current affinity or religious practice tied to two distinct denominations and do not see it as an internal conflict but rather a benefit of more than one understanding, approach, or practice to their overall faith life. They came to learn about and appreciate both denominations either through their parents during their upbringing or later in life through a spouse, partner, or through their own faith exploration.

1. **Category Example 1:** “My parents were faithful Catholics. We were raised as faithful Catholics. In college, I studied world religions. I was drawn to an evangelical church. I still attend Mass and attend Bible study at evangelical church. I am grateful to my parents’ faith and structure.”
2. **Category Example 2:** “I do not belong to a particular church currently, but I practice with my boyfriend's family (Catholic) and my family (Lutheran) depending on the event. My religious views have not changed, just not restricted to defining or being labeled as one vs. the other.”
3. **Category Example 3:** “As a child I was raised as a Catholic. I'm baptized, first communion, confirmation and hopefully soon married by church. I have to admit having parents from different religions made me learn from the Pentecostal and love both religions. The Catholic religion has many things I dislike and when I had my own

children, I decided I wasn't going to impose a certain religion on them but let them decide on their own as adults.”

While only three (3) individuals fell under this category, their religious practices were unique enough to merit its own distinction. In many cases, others find internal conflict and strife when having to choose or live between two denominations or faith practices, but not these individuals. They view it as an added benefit to know about and be involved with two approaches over one.

#### **Category 6: Change in Progress (7% of participants)**

Individuals in this category have a clear desire to explore what it is that they now (as an adult) want to believe in or practice in relation to religion and spirituality. They are in a position where they consciously know that their upbringing practice or affiliation is no longer what they wish to follow fully or partially, but also have not yet identified what is their new religious affiliation or spiritual practice. Some in this category have begun to explore other options, while others have a plan to do so in the future.

- 1. Category Example 1:** “I grew up in a really strict Catholic household and had to go to mass every Sunday. Prayed at home all the time. As I got older, the more I realized this was my parents’ religion and what they wanted me to follow. I am currently on my own spiritual quest, exploring other religions out there.”
- 2. Category Example 2:** “Was really involved in the church as a kid. Was an altar server till when I left to college. I was involved in church while in college. When I left college, I started to break away from the church due to politics being brought into the sermons. Right now I'm engaged to a non-denominational Christian and have started to go to Christian churches. Fighting with myself, what I like about the Catholic church and the Christian church.”

- 3. Category Example 3:** “I no longer observe a religion as I felt that Catholicism was forced on me. I think I'm at a place where I want to discover what I believe in rather than what my parents believe in.”

**Category 7: Substantial Change (24% of participants)**

Individuals in this category have gone through and identified a significant change in religious affiliation or spiritual practice. This would include a change to a new denomination, a new religion or spiritual practice, or have made a clear choice to identify as agnostic or atheist. These individuals no longer identify as the affiliation of their upbringing and have come to a decision on an affiliation or practice that is substantially different from that of their childhood.

- 1. Category Example 1:** “My religious practices have changed. I was raised in an oddly legalistic, but freely alcoholic home. My parents were Catholic before the United States but switched religions frequently. Once my parents separated, my father became Pentecostal, and my mother became Mormon. My teen years were spent Mormon. It wasn't until I was in college that I became an evangelical Christian (Protestant). I've been Christian for over 10 years now.”
- 2. Category Example 2:** “Thankfully, I was blessed enough to belong to churches that believed in the Holy Spirit. I grew up Catholic from birth until about age 8. I made my first holy communion. Shortly thereafter, we began to attend a Pentecostal church. There they sang, danced, and freely spoke in tongues. Words of knowledge were given quite often. I can remember one time during our annual Summer Youth Retreat, I was given a word of knowledge by the guest speaker. He knew nothing of my upbringing and what I truly desired in my heart. He gave me a word that was so right on. Fast forward 30 years. I'm in a non-denominational Christian church that I love so much. We are so free. We

worship freely through the dance, we move in the Spirit, we pray for people, etc.”

- 3. Category Example 3:** “Radically different, brought up as a strict Catholic, my process of spiritual exploration started in college and currently I do not believe in a specific deity and would consider myself an agnostic with no time or desire to continue to explore or define my beliefs.”

This category includes the full spectrum of substantial changes in religious affiliation. Examples include going from one Christian-based denomination to a distinctly different Christian-based denomination (e.g. Catholic to Pentecostal or vice versa), going from Christianity to Native/indigenous inspired spiritual practices, or going from Christianity to clearly defining one’s new spiritual beliefs as agnostic who believes in a higher power or an agnostic who values morality but does not believe in a higher power. Agnostics and atheists are placed in this category instead of the “disengaged” categories below due to the fact that individuals here (in the “substantial change” category that did identify as agnostic or atheist) have clearly defined their new spiritual practice as being agnostic or atheist, whereas the “disengaged” categories below still hold some affinity to the affiliation of their upbringing or have not defined themselves as now being agnostic or atheist despite low to high disengagement in religion or spiritual practices. The spiritual practices of agnosticism and atheism are also respected as practices that individuals can consciously choose for a spiritual practice that can still involve a spiritual community, moral followings, and even faith belief parameters, marking another reason why these two options were not placed in the “disengaged” categories that we will now discuss.

**Category 8: Disengaged, low end (17% of participants)**

Individuals in this category still have an affiliation or affinity toward the religious affiliation of their upbringing or their family’s most recent religious affiliation. However, they



have reached a point of being disengaged from that very religion or spiritual practice due to a conflict or minor differences in theology, such as desiring a spiritual home or community that is less strict/legalistic, more inclusive, more involved in social justice issues, or free of interpersonal issues that they have encountered, as examples. Many in this category frequent their religious services much less or sparingly, while still not wanting to relinquish that very affiliation. For others, it has simply become a matter of being too busy to focus on their religious or spiritual practices, while still not citing any kind of change in religious beliefs.

- 1. Category Example 1:** “I grew up very involved in the church, to the point I thought about becoming a priest. Now I pray from home but rarely attend church. I got married through the Catholic Church but later got divorced, in the eyes of the church I will always be married to my ex-wife. I have tried twice to get my marriage annulled with no luck. My current wife doesn't have a religion, she tried becoming a Catholic and was turned away because of my marriage with my ex-wife. I no longer feel welcome to church because they turned my wife away.”
- 2. Category Example 2:** “My religious practices have become a lot more loose, I don't attend church on a regular basis, I go against some of the beliefs I grew up with such as no drinking, premarital sex, and working on Saturdays (I have only felt comfortable doing this the last couple of months and unsure if I completely feel comfortable with it). Reason for the changes was that I did not feel comfortable at church because social justice issues were not being addressed correctly. While my family actively advocates for social justice issues and my parents understand the church isn't perfect, they have continued to attend and push change from within while I have decided to step back. I still identify as SDA and probably always will, but the institution is meh for me right now.”

- 3. Category Example 3:** “I would consider my practice more independent as an adult. My beliefs remain very much the same, but I've had more difficulty relating to the congregation I'm part of due to my own experiences and observations to how we all interact.”

As one can see in Example 1 in this category, the individual is Catholic and wants to remain Catholic, but the church has not accepted his second wife as a church member, hence causing him to become disengaged from his church. The desire to remain affiliated is there and there is no mention of wanting to change affiliation, but the circumstance related to Catholic doctrine on marriage (related to his first marriage) has caused him to disengage. He is placed as a “low end” due to him still desiring to be affiliated and even attempting to get engaged, though circumstances and rules have disengaged him.

Example 2 is another person still wanted to remain affiliated as 7th Day Adventist (SDA) despite minor theological differences in SDA doctrine and rules related to the items they cite in their quote, including their desire for their church to really tackle social justice issues but not seeing enough being done in that regard. This has caused the individual to disengage from services, but they desire to remain affiliated.

Example 3 states clearly that their beliefs “remain very much the same” but their congregation has caused them to disengage from services and spiritual community. However, their overall beliefs are still in place and no substance change has occurred in their religious affiliation.

Overall, the low end disengaged seem to be more open to re-engaging if certain elements could change or be put in place, often related to their local spiritual home or community, though for others in this category certain minor doctrinal difference or dislike of legalistic approaches by

their religious groups would require a more major shift within that religious group at a macro level than just changes in micro elements in their local spiritual home or community. In any case, the desire to continue to affiliate and potentially re-engage in the future is evident within this category.

**Category 9: Disengaged, high end (10% of participants)**

Individuals in this category have little to no affinity or devotion to their religious affiliation or spiritual practice from their upbringing. In many cases, there is a level of disdain toward that religion due to either a personal experience or due to historical aspects of that religion. Individuals in this category are even less likely to engage in religious or spiritual activities or services that are even periodic or sparingly and many are closer to the spectrum of agnosticism or atheism but have not declared such an affiliation, though in some cases allude to it. These individuals often declare a severe lack of desire or intention to re-engage with their most recent affiliation or with any organized religion in general.

- 1. Category Example 1:** “Growing up, I would go to church ‘religiously’. Meaning, I would go on Wednesdays, Fridays, Saturdays, and Sunday mornings. Now, I don’t go to church at all. In large part because of what I experienced as a child. Too much.”
- 2. Category Example 2:** “Religion was a big deal in my family. We would not only go on Sunday but during the week too. Now I never go to mass and question everything about Catholicism because of the real history of why most Mexicans are Catholic.”
- 3. Category Example 3:** “As a child, I grew up in the Church of Christ. I stopped attending church since about 15 years old. As an adult, I rarely, if ever, attend church. When I do, it is to random churches with friends.”

Combined, the low end disengaged (17%) and the high end disengaged (10%) represent 27% of

all participants. Between both categories, individuals frequent religious or spiritual services and activities very minimally to not at all. Some have more minor barriers or issues with their childhood or current religious affiliation and may be willing to re-engage in the near future, while others have much more grave issues and have absolutely no desire to re-engage with any religious institution.

The percentage summary for all categories is as follows:

Overarching Category	Shift Category	Raw #	%
<b>Embedded Affiliation &amp; Engaged (37%)</b>	<b>No Affiliation Change</b>	<b>43</b>	<b>18%</b>
	<b>Semi-Shift</b>	<b>37</b>	<b>15%</b>
	<b>Circle Back</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>4%</b>
<b>Other (1.5%)</b>	<b>Coerced Affiliation</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>0.41%</b>
	<b>Denominational Duality</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>1%</b>
<b>Change in Progress or Substantial Change (31%)</b>	<b>Change in Progress</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>7%</b>
	<b>Substantial Change</b>	<b>58</b>	<b>24%</b>
<b>Disengaged (27%)</b>	<b>Disengaged (low end)</b>	<b>40</b>	<b>17%</b>
	<b>Disengaged (high end)</b>	<b>24</b>	<b>10%</b>
<b>Insufficient Data (3%)</b>	<b>Insufficient Data</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>3%</b>
	<b>Total</b>	<b>242</b>	

### Participant Insight into Preference of Language of Religious Services

Now we pivot to the question in the survey that delved into the language preferences for religious and spiritual services for survey participants. The question posed was, “12) Do you or would you prefer to attend religious/spiritual services in English, Spanish, bilingual, or doesn't matter?” All respondents were 2<sup>nd</sup>- and 1.5-generation Latinos, though as we have seen above,

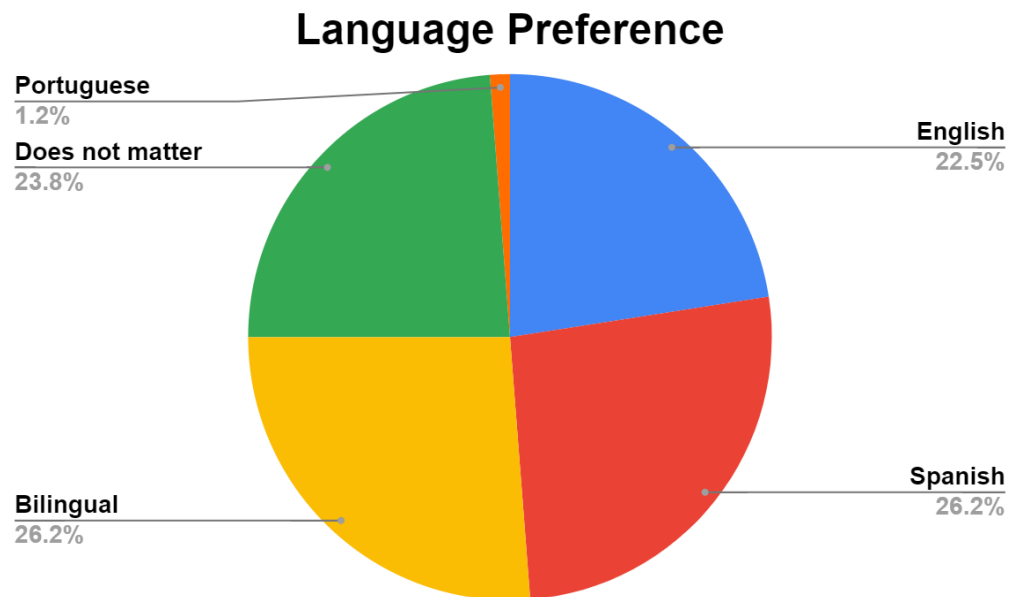
they are also across all affiliation and engagement categories. With this in mind, 22.5% of respondents preferred their religious/spiritual services to be in English, 26.2% preferred them to be in Spanish, 26.2% would prefer bilingual services, and 23.8% stated that it does not matter to them what language the service is in (individuals who are likely bilingual and could understand the service whether it was in English or Spanish). A small minority of our respondents at 1.2% stated a Portuguese preference, likely coming from our Brazilian respondents whose native language is Portuguese.

With these figures in mind, and looking at the chart below, we have a virtually even split between the four options of English, Spanish, Bilingual, or no preference. This shows the diversity in preference amongst this specific population and serves as a good reminder or lesson to new religious outreach efforts that attempt to serve the local Latino population. There appears to be a tendency for White-led ministry projects to default to the thought that Latino outreach efforts need to be in Spanish, while we see below that only 26.2% prefer their religious services strictly in Spanish. On the other end, Spanish-based Latino churches (especially first-generation led churches) tend to have a strong affinity for keeping their services in Spanish, when a combined 48.7% would prefer services in either English or bilingual. So, following the logic of Daniel A. Rodriguez's *A Future for the Latino Church*, church services in these Spanish-based churches often need to evolve to keep substantial portions of the younger generations engaged and comfortable in their spiritual home.<sup>84</sup> One of the key takeaways here is the lack of an actual majority preference but rather a matter of preference. Hence, with this diversity in preference in mind, it elevates the importance of truly gauging what the preference is of the local community

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<sup>84</sup> Daniel A. Rodriguez, *A Future for the Latino Church: Models for Multilingual, Multigenerational Hispanic Congregations* (Downers Grove, IL: IVP Academic, 2011), 167-175.

and avoids any assumptions with 1.5- and 2<sup>nd</sup>-generation Latinos.



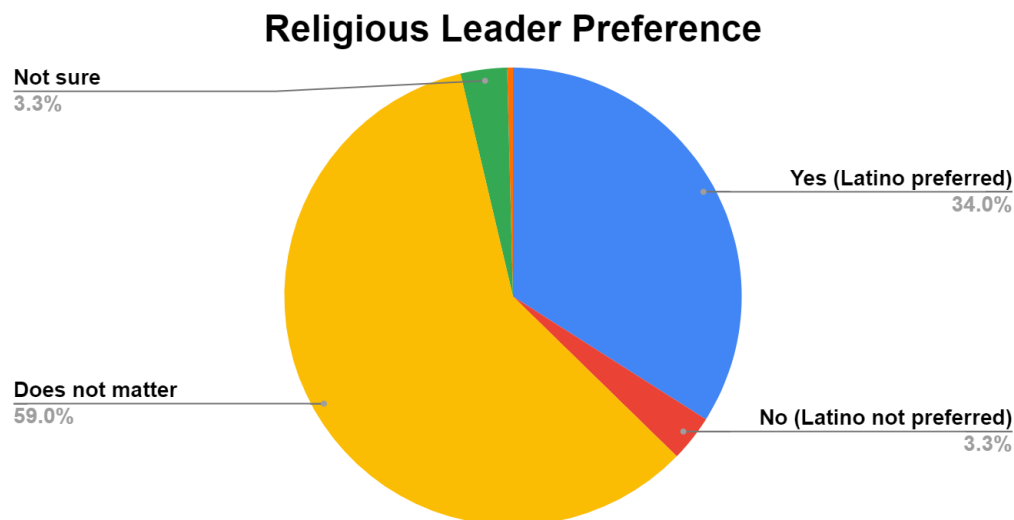
### Participant Insight into Preference of Ethnicity of Religious Leader

Just like some may assume what language preference a Latino within these demographics may desire for worship services, the same may be done for what a Gen Z to Generation X Latino may prefer for the ethnicity of their religious leader.

The question was posed, “Do you prefer to attend a religious/spiritual service with a Latino or Latinx religious leader (such as a Pastor, Priest, Imam, Rabbi, etc.)? To this end, among all participants, the result was that 34% of survey participants do indeed prefer to have a Latino for their religious leader. However, most participants, at 59%, responded that it “does not matter” what the ethnicity of their religious leader is. A much smaller minority at 3.3% responded that they are “not sure” and 3.3% responded that “No (Latino not preferred)” for their religious leader.

One can see a couple of primary takeaways from these results. First, almost two-thirds of Latinos Gen Z to X do not have a preference for the ethnicity of their religious leader, meaning

that they are very open-minded and willing to have a religious leader that is different from their own ethnicity or open to any ethnicity in general. They do not feel that they need somebody of their own ethnicity to connect with religious services and spiritual homes. The other one-third do prefer to have a Latino religious leader, meaning that there is some kind of desire, affinity toward, or preference for having a religious leader that is of the same ethnicity as their own, being that a Latino religious/spiritual home attendee (e.g. a congregant) does indeed desire to have a Latino religious leader (e.g. pastor, priest, imam, or rabi). While there is a clear majority within the “does not matter” category, there is a substantial “Yes (Latino preferred)” minority that would merit a similar recommendation given with the language preference question above; that recommendation being that there is enough diversity in preference amongst the younger Latino generations that one should really engage and glean what the local preference is of local Latinos within one’s own community in order to cater a ministry or spiritual outreach program that truly captures what is desired within one’s own local community.



### **Participant Insight into Preference of Congregation Ethnicity**

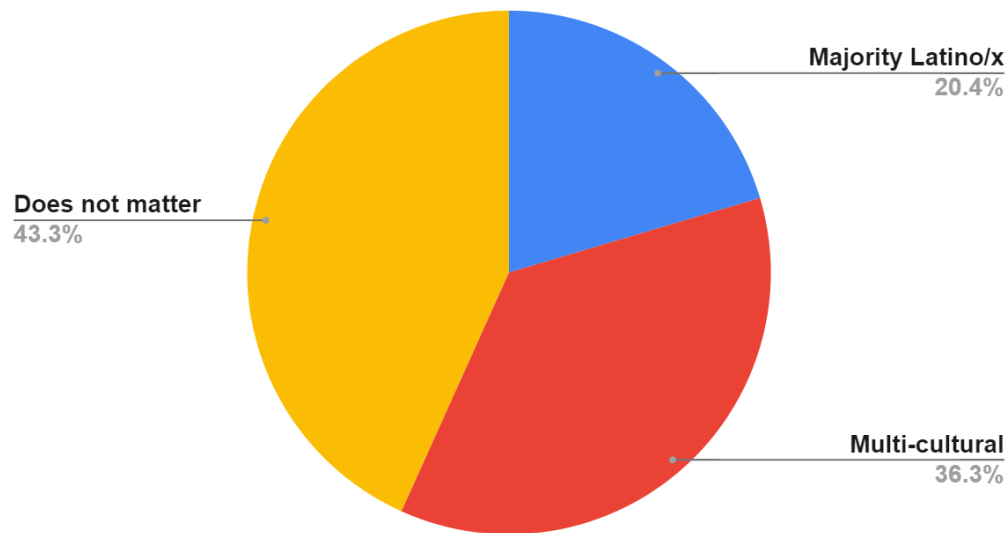
Another ethnicity-related question was posed to survey participants, but this time focused

on fellow congregants as opposed to a religious leader. The question read, “Would you prefer to attend a religious or spiritual service where the majority of the other attendees are Latino or Latinx, multicultural, doesn't matter, or other? To this question came a bit more diversity of thought, with three primary divides coming through in responses. To begin, there were 20.4% of respondents that specified that they do prefer a majority of their fellow congregants to be Latino/x. Additionally, there were 36.3% of respondents that said they prefer a “multicultural” congregation at their religious/spiritual home to be made up of individuals from different cultural and ethnic backgrounds other than their own (i.e. Latino/x). Lastly, the option with the most responses was “Does not matter” which was chosen by 43.3% of respondents, meaning that these respondents were not necessarily focused on finding a spiritual home filled with congregants of their own ethnicity nor seeking a congregation that is intentionally multi-cultural, but rather simply did not place a priority nor preference on the congregational make-up of their religious/spiritual home.

Just shy of half the respondents did not have an ethnic/cultural preference when it came to the make-up of their religious/spiritual home while a bit over half of the other respondents either preferred a multicultural congregation or one that majority of their own ethnicity (i.e. Latino/x). Once again, the diversity in preference is substantial enough that one should always defer to an initial step of gauging their own local population when it comes to developing local ministry/spiritual outreach efforts in their respective community.



## Congregation Preference

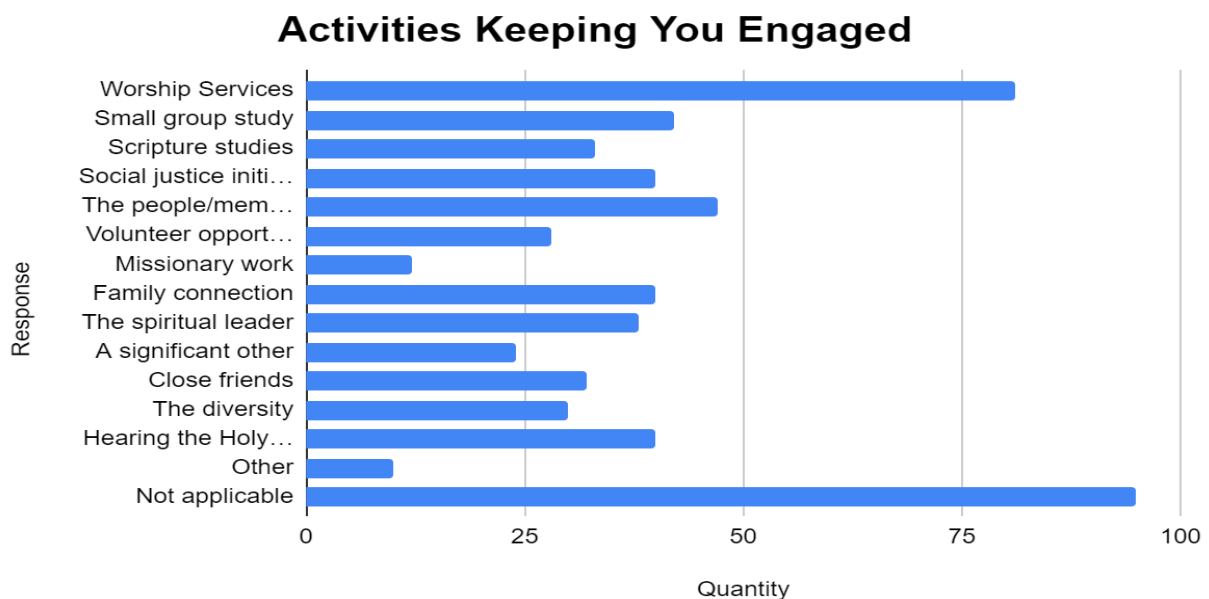


### Activities that Keep Participants Engaged in Their Spiritual Home

A question was posed to glean what type of activities keep this demographic engaged within their religious/spiritual home. The question read, “If you currently have a religious / spiritual home (church, synagogue, mosque, etc.), which of these activities or reasons keep you engaged and going to this spiritual home?”

Right away one notices that 38.5% (or 95 respondents) marked “Not applicable.” These would be individuals not currently a member or frequent participant within a religious or spiritual home and hence marked the question as “Not applicable.” From there, the other next most typical response would be the option of “Worship Services”, which 32.80% of participants chose as the activity or one of the activities (participants could choose more than one) that keeps them engaged in their religious/spiritual home. On the least chosen end, the option of “Missionary work” was only chosen by 4.9% of participants in regard to keeping them engaged. From there, all of the other options landed somewhere between the 10% and 19% range, with no other breaking past 20% like “Worship Services” did.

The ones that broke past 15% and represented the next 6 most popular options for keeping participants engaged (out of 12 remaining options) included “The people/members” at 19%, followed by “Small group study” at 17%, then “Social justice initiatives” and “Family connection” both landing at 16.20%, and lastly “The spiritual leader” at 15%. One can see the relationship importance in these top options, from the family and congregant connection to affinity toward small group study, a personal connection to the spiritual leader, or a desire for social justice initiatives that aim to help people or issues that affect people in the community or society overall. This all culminates with the coming together of people during worship services, which keeps people engaged in their religious/spiritual home more than any other option.



### Values that Participants have Regarding Spiritual Home

Next, we posed a question of what values participants value within a religious/spiritual home. The question was posed as, “What aspects of a religious/spiritual home do you value?” Interestingly, only 13.50% marked “Not applicable” in this question as opposed to the 38.50% in the previous question about activities keeping one engaged, so it would appear that a large

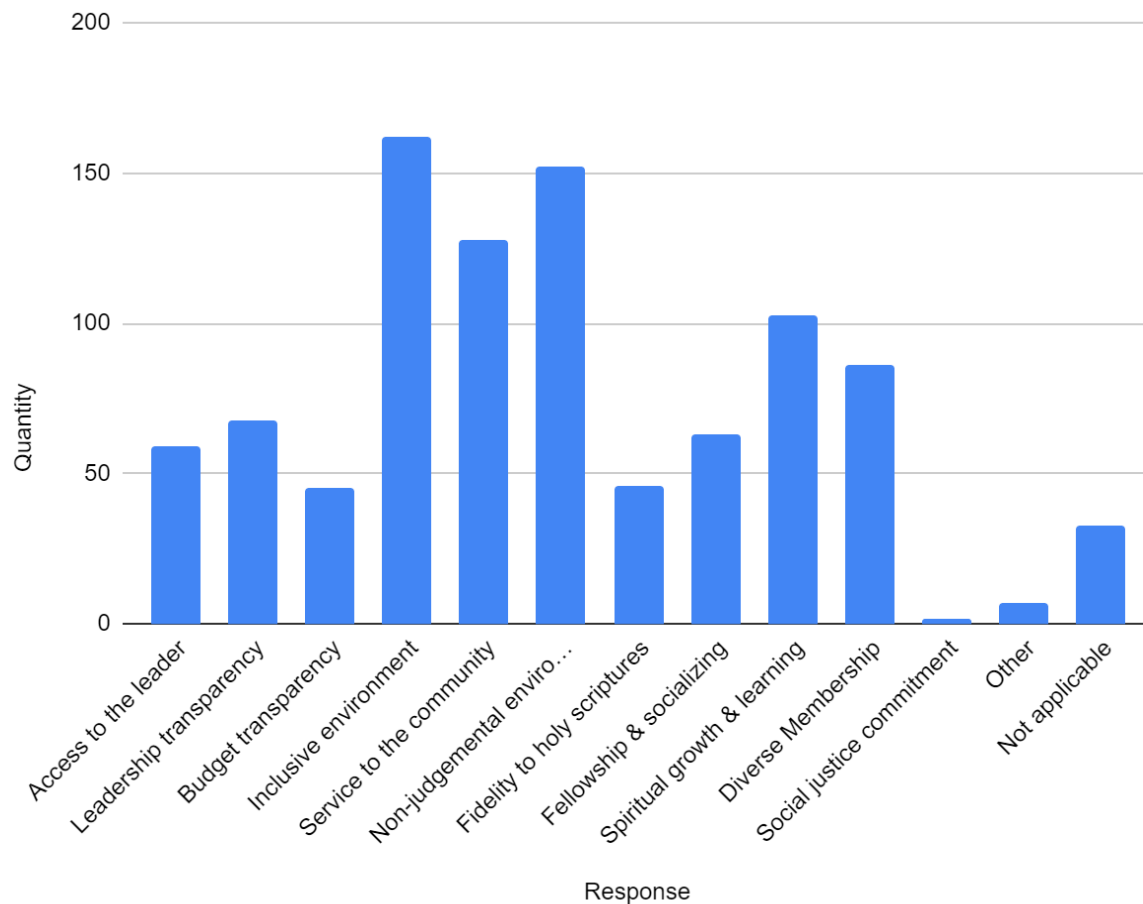
percentage of those who aren't engaged in a religious or spiritual home currently still answered this question regarding what they value of a religious or spiritual home.

There were two options that broke the 60% threshold, being the value of an "Inclusive environment" coming in as the top-rated value at 65.3%, followed by a "Non-judgmental environment" at 62% of all participants. From there, one option broke the 50% threshold, being the value of "Service to the community" coming in at 52.2%, followed by the only value to break 40%, which was "Spiritual growth and learning" coming in at 42%.

The final notable mentions would include the value of "Diverse membership" at 33.9%, the value of "Leadership transparency" at 27.8%, the value of "Fellowship & socializing" at 25.7%, and the final value to break 20% is "Access to the leader" at 24.1%.

Judging from the top six selected values chosen by participants, it would appear that our Gen Z to X Latino participants of the 1.5 and 2<sup>nd</sup> generation hold a high regard for the values of an inclusive religious/spiritual home that provides for a non-judgmental environment and also opportunities to serve the community, alongside the opportunity for spiritual growth, access to their spiritual leader(s), and many value having a diverse membership.

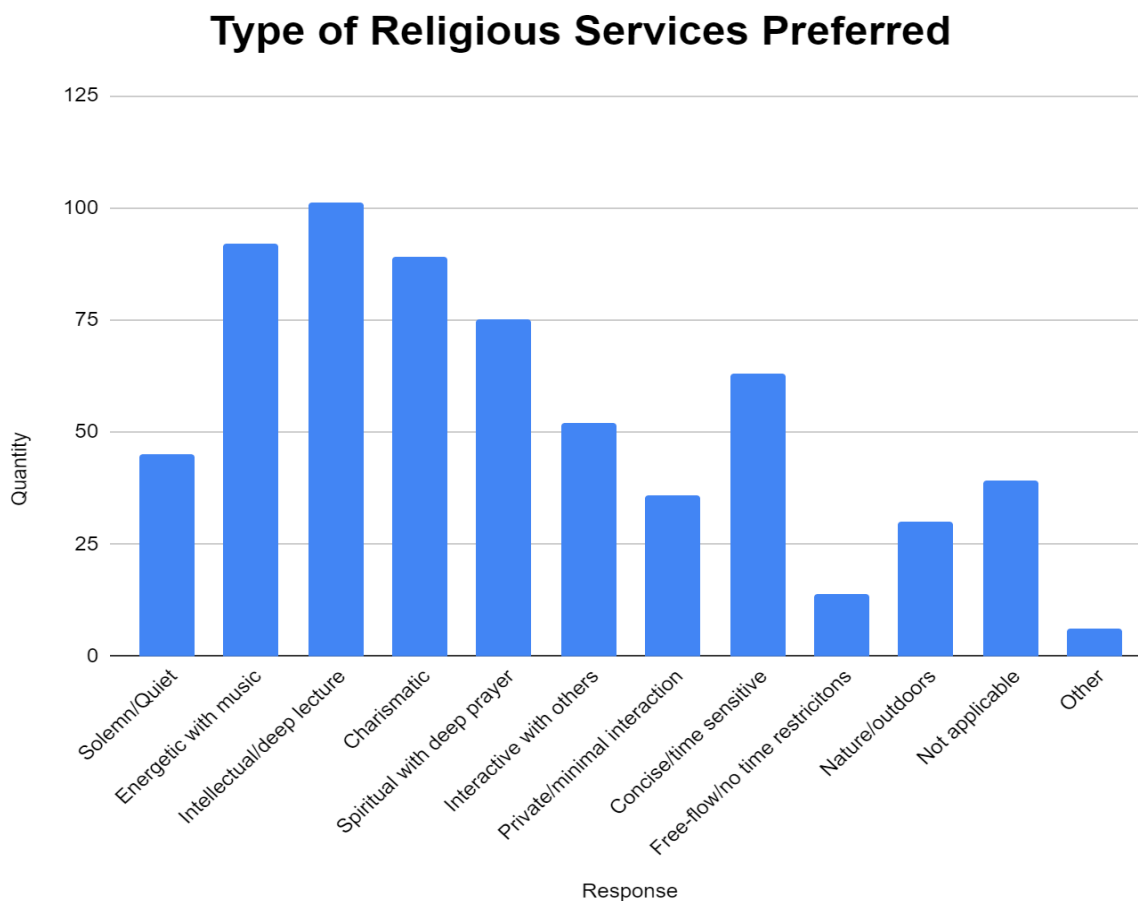
## Valued Aspects of A Spiritual Home



### Participant Feedback on Preferences Regarding Religious Worship Services

The question of “What kind of religious or spiritual service do you prefer?” was posed to participants. The top and only option to break the 40% threshold was the religious/spiritual service option of “Intellectual/deep lecture”. This was followed by a close second and third of “Energetic with music” at 38% and “Charismatic” at 36.8%. A slightly more distant fourth place was “Spiritual with deep prayer” at 31%. The final two options to round out the top six and the only remaining ones to break the 20% threshold were “Concise/time sensitive” at 26% and then “Interactive with others” at 21.1%. Judging from these top six options, a substantial number of 1.5- and 2<sup>nd</sup>-generation Latinos who are also Gen Z to X prefer to have religious or spiritual

services that are energetic, charismatic, interactive, and time sensitive, balanced with a deep and substantive lecture.

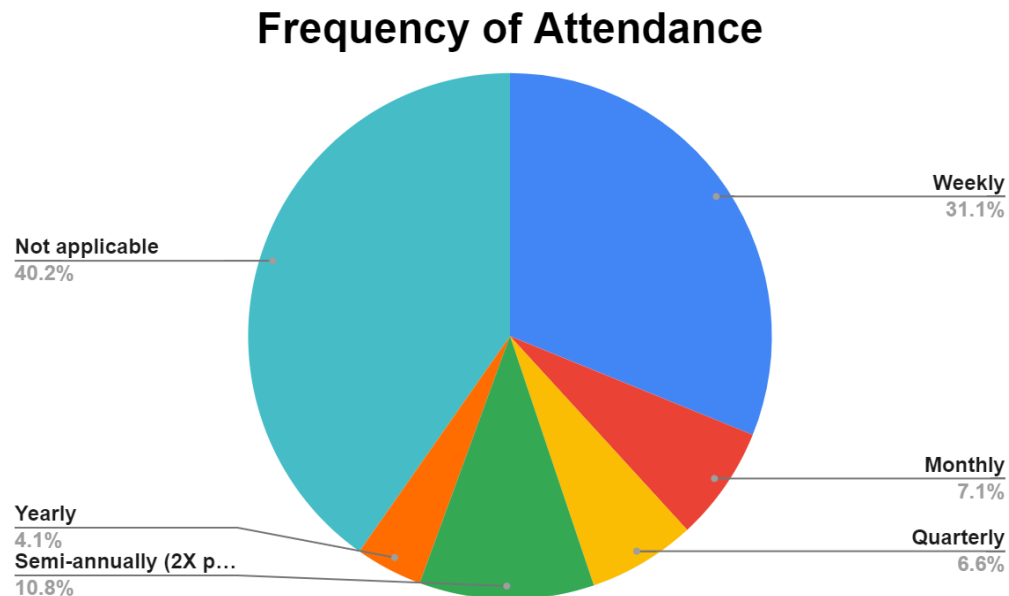


### **Participant Frequency of Attendance of Religious Services**

Participants were also asked about their frequency for attending religious or spiritual services with the question of “If you currently have a religious or spiritual home, about how often do you attend/frequent it?” “A notable 40.2% marked “Not applicable” presumably due to not being currently engaged with a religious or spiritual home as a member or frequenter, similar to the 38.5% that marked “Not applicable” to the question of what activities one’s current religious or spiritual home conducts that keeps one engaged.

To this frequency question, the highest marked option outside of “Not applicable” was

the “Weekly” option that came in at 31.1%. The remaining four options all ranked similarly low, with 10.8% marking “Semi-annually”, followed by 7.1% at “Monthly”, then 6.6% at “Quarterly”, and lastly 4.1% marking “Yearly”.

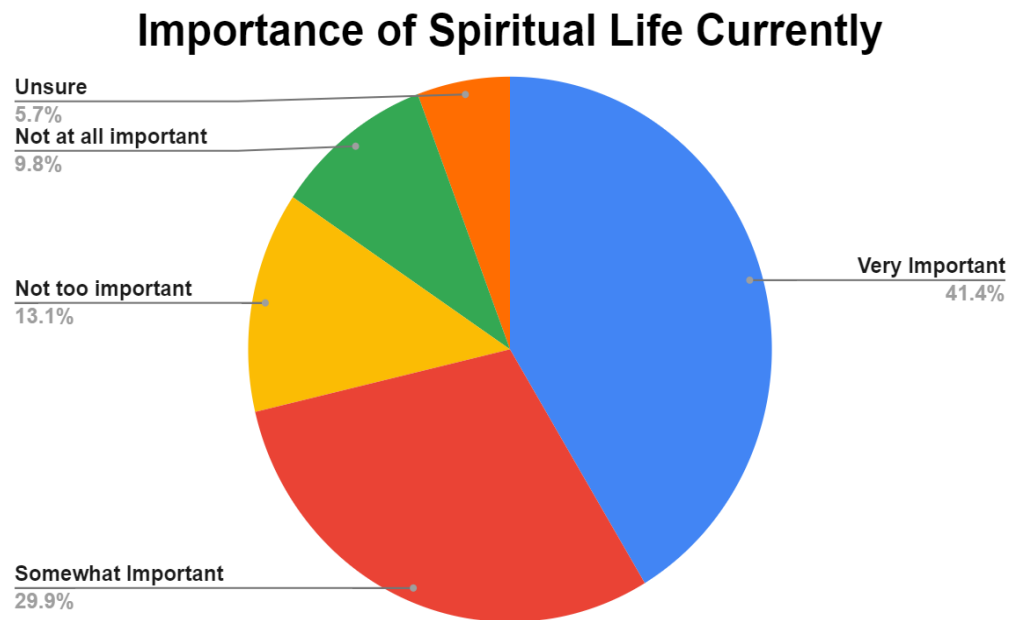


### Participant Rating of Importance of Spirituality in Life Compared to All Aspects of Life

With figures in this study showing the agnostic and atheist affiliation growing from 2.2% to 19.8% (embedded to current theology) and seeing a combined level of 26.5% of participants on a “disengaged” range from low to high, one might start to think that there is a substantial decline in the importance of spiritual life for the demographic being studied. However, the following two questions paint a different picture.

Participants were asked, “How would you rate the importance of your religious/spiritual life in comparison to other aspects of your life?” To this end, 41.4% of participants rated their spiritual life as “Very important” followed by 29.9% that rated it as “Somewhat important”. Between the “somewhat” to “very” important categories combined, one gets 71.3% of participants rating a positive and notable importance on their spiritual life. A much smaller set of

participants rated their spiritual life as “Not too important” at 13.1% and also “Not at all important” at 9.8%, making a combined total of 22.9% that rated their spiritual life on a notable low end of importance or a lack of importance. Lastly, 5.7% marked “unsure” when it came to the importance question.

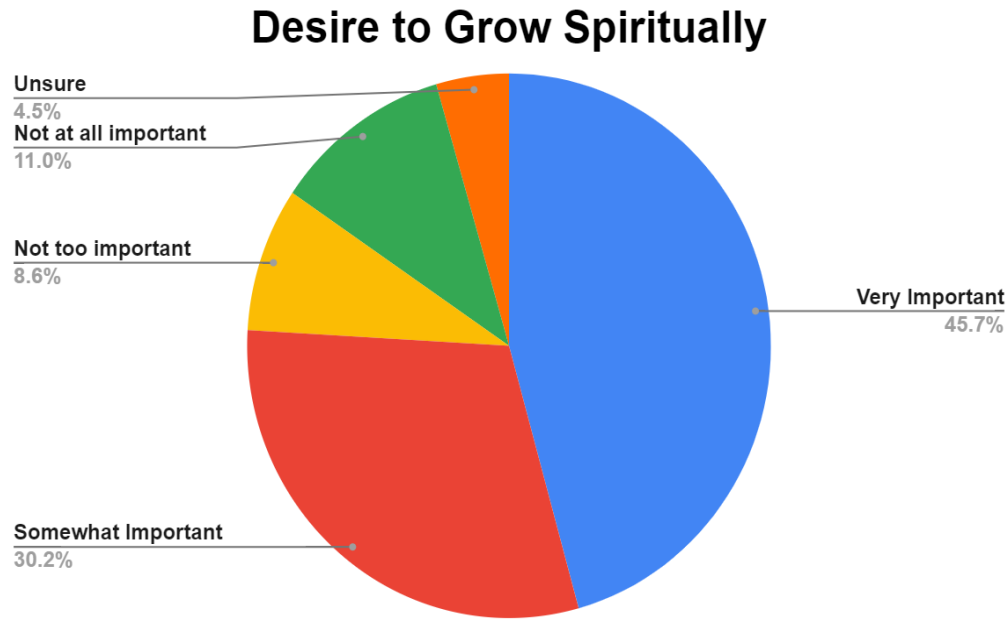


### Participant Desire to Grow Spiritually in the Next 1 to 3 Years

Participants were also asked, “How would you rate your desire to grow spiritually (or continue to grow spiritually) within the next one to three years?” To this question, 45.7% rated their desire to grow spiritual in the one to three years as “Very important” while 30.2% rated it as “Somewhat important”. This created a combined total of 75.9% rating their desire to grow spiritually within the range of notable and positive importance, similar to the 71.3% in the last question that rated their spiritual life as somewhat to very important.

On the other end, 8.6% rated their desire to grow spiritually as “Not too important” and 11% rated it as “Not at all important” for a combined total of 19.6% that rated near future spiritual growth a notably not too important or not at all important, similar to the 22.9% that

rated their spiritual life as not too important or not at all important in the last question.



### How Spiritual Homes and Leaders Can Engage & Support Individuals

The final questions within my survey related to exploring how a spiritual home can support or engage the survey participant and how a spiritual leader could support or engage the survey participant as it relates to their own spiritual life. Both questions were open-ended questions and allowed participants to provide feedback in their own words. In order to provide some processing of the feedback, similar themes and comments were placed into categories that were derived from respondent feedback. The categories and raw numbers can be found here:

<b>Categorizations Derived from Feedback - Spiritual Leader</b>	<b>Raw #</b>
Maintain Scriptural Fidelity	7
Be Personable & Caring	25
Be Community Oriented & Inclusive	22
Be Inspirational and a Role Model	9
Have Integrity and be Accessible	5
Be a Teacher and a Guide	49
Engage in Social Justice	6
Other	30



I Don't Know	17
Don't Want Spiritual Care	9
Not Applicable	16

So, to the question of how a spiritual leader can support a 1.5 or 2<sup>nd</sup> generation Latino, there was one category with substantially more respondents than all of the rest, being “Be a Teacher and a Guide”. To exemplify this spiritual care desire, here are some examples from the forty-nine respondents in this category:

- “By allowing me a way to be spiritual without religion but with guidance,”
- “By getting to know me and inviting me to really take the scriptures seriously.”
- “By guiding me through the scriptures. Answering my questions; Where do I start, where do I go?”
- “By guiding me through the scriptures. Answering my questions; Where do I start, where do I go?”
- “Challenge my thoughts or beliefs.”
- “By sharing God's mercy and love for me. Even when I don't deserve it. We all need that message in our lives. Understanding God's love helps me to share that overwhelming feeling with others.”
- “Engaging in some reflection questions with me, and dialogue related to spiritual growth.”
- “I would like to have a direct conversation with a priest to ask some of those questions related to the Bible and how they apply to our everyday life. It would be nice for him to start a Bible study.”
- “Making the word relatable to daily life. Giving examples and making accessible.”

Almost one-third of participants desired some kind of teacher, counselor, or spiritual guide from

their or a spiritual leader. In many cases, this demographic desires to have honest, real dialogue with a spiritual authority or ministerial worker with the ability to ask frank questions and even the desire to be challenged themselves; to reflect further and obtain a level of relationship and trust with a spiritual care provider that allows for this kind of dialogue.

At a distant second and third place came the categories of a spiritual care provider being “Personable and Caring” at 14% of respondents and a spiritual leader being “Community Oriented and Inclusive” at 12% of respondents. While themes of spiritual leaders being culturally competent, social justice oriented, inspirational and a role model, and various others appeared through all respondent feedback, their most prevalent desire was simply to have that direct care in the form of a spiritual teacher, guide, or counselor figure. The resounding response and desire is better demonstrated here:



Now, we delve into the sister question of what respondents desire from a spiritual home in relation to engaging or supporting their spiritual journey. With this question, there was not one single outlier like in the previous question on spiritual leaders. Instead, two made the top spot with two more earning notable mentions. The categorizations and raw figures are as follows:

<b>Categorizations Derived from Feedback - Spiritual Home</b>	<b>Raw #</b>
Be Less Judgmental	27
Do Community Service	17
Provide Scriptural Truth	3
Provide Interpersonal Activities	27
Give Individual Attention	5
Be Multicultural	13
Other	38
Have a Social Justice Focus	11
Not Sure	8
Have Energetic Services	7

As one can see, the two categories represented most in relation to spiritual homes are “Be less judgmental” and “Provide Interpersonal Activities”. First, we delve into some direct feedback from those who responded with the Be Less Judgmental category. Some examples include:

- “A more open spiritual home that is accepting of others is what I would look for. An emphasis on community service is also important to me.”
- “Be more inclusive and up to date with issues around the world. Not be so stuck to beliefs and views of the past.”
- “Be more open. I feel like the churches I've been to are very judgmental.”
- “Be welcoming of all peoples, no matter what. Be open to questioning one's spirituality in order to bring one closer to being spiritual as opposed to religious.”
- “I would be engaged if I felt welcomed as I am. I shouldn't have to change who I am to start attending.”

- “Provide non-judgmental guidance.”

The direct feedback above is representative of the general themes and feedback from those in this category. We see a demographic that wants to move away from experiences or a past in which their spiritual home was intensely judgmental in different ways and did not provide for a welcoming and inclusive environment. Moreover, many in this category want a spiritual home open to questions on spirituality and religion, and even still want to be guided, but without a spiritual care practice that places negative judgmental on them for questioning religious theology and practices nor demeans them for the journey they are on spiritually. One-fifth of respondents fell into this category.

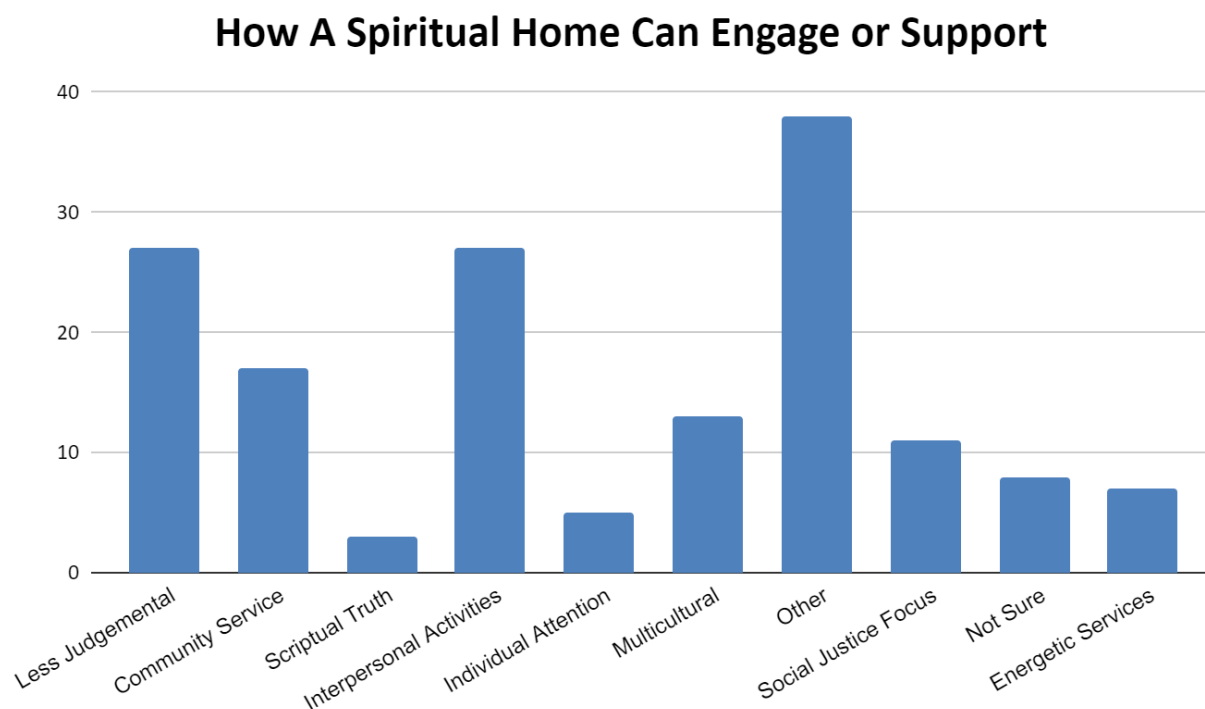
The other category that tied for first place was “Provide Interpersonal Activities”. Some examples of what respondents desire from their spiritual home within this category include:

- “BIPOC focused meetings for input.”
- “Just being more connected with me not feeling out of place.”
- “Life groups were life changing.”
- “More activities where more interaction is available outside of times of worship.”
- “Provide a structured mentorship program, have a young adults class.”
- “Provide spiritual guidance via technology.”
- “Small groups and prayer meetings.”

One-fifth of respondents also fell into this category as it relates to how a spiritual home can or does support or engage respondents. Many in this demographic want to feel connected and to meet others also actively engaged in their own spiritual journey. Small groups and mentorship were brought up, as well as some desiring technology being incorporated into options for a spiritual home to engage them (e.g. spiritual care meetings over Zoom). Overall, from

respondents in this category, they do not attend a spiritual home to be secluded and alone but rather they go to connect and build a spiritual care network.

A spiritual home being engaged in community service and outreach earned a notable third place at 12% of respondents and a spiritual home being and inviting multiculturalism was in fourth at 9% of all respondents. Within these two categories, individuals wanted to see their spiritual home actively and intentionally engaged in serving their community and putting their faith into action, and also living out their faith with those of different cultural backgrounds within spiritual homes that seek to be both culturally aware, competent, and diverse in membership. A graph showing all respondent input is provided as follows:



One can see that the “Other” category had a substantial number of respondents, but none were sufficiently related to one another in multitudes to merit their own category. Some of these “Other” comments regarding spiritual home outreach and support to individuals include:

- “Be open and honest about your own spiritual journey and imperfections.”

- “Connect the Bible to the real world and examples and not be so monotone.”
- “I’m not sure I’ve never had that type of relationship with a church to see what it could do for me. As a child when I was at church, it was always, what can I do for the church?”
- “Keeping it real, real world problems.”
- “Pastors developing female leaders would help.”

While these “Other” comments were miscellaneous, they include topics and themes that touch on sentiments seen through this entire research study and certainly merit being noted and considered as well.

## Conclusion

With this study, we have gotten the breadth of a sample across twenty-three (23) states and the District of Columbia, and across eighteen (18) countries of Latin American heritage from Mexico to Central America, South America, and the Caribbean islands. This sample of 1.5 and 2<sup>nd</sup> generation Latinos were within the age parameters of Gen Z, Millennials, and Generation X. At times, one saw a rather clear majority in preference amongst these younger generations, while other times there was a rich diversity in preferences and thought. Some of these key conclusive findings are summarized below:

- 1. Catholic Affiliation Drops by Almost 50%:** While a majority of 1.5- and 2<sup>nd</sup>-gen respondents grew up Catholic at 76.3%, a substantial shift has occurred within this demographic where now only 43.3% affiliate as Catholic. This represents an almost 50% decrease in affiliation (43.25% decrease).
- 2. Religious “Nones” and Non-Denominational Christians Substantially on the Rise:** Only 2.2% of all respondents stated having an agnostic or atheist upbringing; that affiliation has now increased to 19.80% in current affiliation. This is an 800% increase!

For those choosing to maintain their Christian affiliation but are now looking for something different from their upbringing, many are now moving toward non-denominational churches. This is demonstrated through 11.1% of respondents coming from a non-denominational upbringing to now 18.8% choosing to affiliate as non-denominational.

From this survey sample of 1.5- and 2<sup>nd</sup>-gen Latinos, 1 in 5 Latinos are now a religious “none” and 1 in 5 Latinos are now a non-denominational Christian.

- 3. Do Not Assume Spanish When Launching Latino or Hispanic Outreach:** Language preference for worship services came back rather evenly divided between English, Spanish, and Bilingual preference and those marking “Does not matter”. A small minority from Brazilian heritage prefer Portuguese. With such an even divide, it is very necessary to glean the local preference for language from Latinos within your community and not assume that Hispanic or Latino outreach automatically means that said outreach needs to be in Spanish, especially when working with the 1.5, 2<sup>nd</sup> gen, and beyond.
- 4. Be Cautious of the Latest Ethnic Identifying Trends:** While various circles in academia and elsewhere have pushed the term Latinx, this national survey of Gen Z, Millennial, and Generation X shows that 82.1% of Latinos still self-identify as “Latino / Latina” and that 49.6% still self-identified as “Hispanic”. Only 14.5% of all respondents chose “Latinx” as their preferred ethnic self-identifying term.
- 5. Most Latinos Gen Z – X are Open to a Spiritual Leader of Any Ethnicity:** Close to two-thirds (56.8%) state that the ethnicity of their religious leader “does not matter”, showing that a majority do not prefer or require a religious leader of their own ethnicity. However, a sizable minority (32.7%) did state that they do prefer a Latino religious leader.
- 6. Younger Generations Moving Away from Latino & Spanish-Based Congregations:** Participants at 42.7% stated that the ethnicity of their fellow congregants does not matter while 35.5% desire a multicultural congregation. Only 19.8% want to be in a Latino-majority congregation. This shows that almost half do not place an emphasis on their congregational make-up, while a bit more than one-third wants a very intentionally multicultural setting. Given that many within these generations come from Catholic or



Protestant Spanish speaking and Hispanic-based churches of their parents, this is a dramatic change in preference and attendance practices from the 1<sup>st</sup>-generation immigrant to the 1.5 or 2<sup>nd</sup> generation.

- 7. An Inclusive and Less Judgmental Spiritual Home Is Key:** Within both the multiple choice and open-ended questions, the desire for a more inclusive and less judgmental environment kept resonating at the top. For younger generations that in many cases grew up in their parents' traditional Catholic masses or legalistic Pentecostal and Evangelical environments, they now desire a different approach to spiritual and religious practice. Their top-rated values for a spiritual home included a welcoming and inclusive environment (65.3%), a non-judgmental environment (62%), outreach and service to the community (52.2%), opportunities for spiritual growth and learning (42%), a diverse spiritual home (33.9%), and leadership transparency (27.8%).
- 8. Latinos Are Not a Homogenous Group but Rather the Contrary:** Solely within this survey, participants represented eighteen (18) countries of birth or heritage. This serves as a reminder that Latinos are not a homogenous group, but rather a very diverse set of many distinct groups placed under a very broad cultural umbrella referred to as Latino, Latinx, Hispanic, etc. The diversity of Latinos can be seen through the various backgrounds of nationality, languages spoken, indigenous tribes, religious practices, socio-economic status, political views, et cetera.
- 9. Substantial Majority Desire Spiritual Growth:** Despite substantial figures for disengaged, agnostic, and atheist 1.5- and 2<sup>nd</sup>-gen Latinos, a sizable majority of 70.1% still rank their spiritual life as very important or somewhat important in comparison to other aspects of their life.

Similarly, 75.9% state that their spiritual growth within the next one to three years is very important or somewhat important to them. So, the desire for spiritual growth is ripe and present amongst this demographic regardless of the stages and changes in their spiritual journey.

**10. Upbringing Affiliation, Changed Affiliation, and No Affiliation on Par at about ⅓:**

Latinos that have experienced a substantial change or are considering one stand at 31%, while 37% are engaged and affiliated with a religion or practice related to their religious upbringing, and 27% are currently disengaged from religion. This showcases the diversity in religious experiences amongst this demographic.

**11. 1 in 5 Are Disengaged but Within Reach:** From the sample, 17% are “low end disengaged” whose disengagement is often due to busy schedules, ceasing to congregate after leaving the home for college, or craving a spiritual home that caters to their desires now as an adult (e.g. more diversity, less legalism, more social justice emphasis). In most cases, this low-end disengaged population still affiliates to some degree with a specific religion. This demographic could be more easily re-engaged with enough relevant and catered ministry and congregational activities that appeals to this demographic.

**12. Bring on the Mix of Both Depth and Energy Within Service, Plus Connections:** On worship service preference, the top preference was a service that is intellectual with a deep lecture (41.3%), followed by energetic with plenty of music (38%), charismatic, spiritual and deep with prayer (31%), concise and time-sensitive (26%), and interactive with others (21.1%). So, this demographic wants to be both challenged and engaged intellectually while also appreciating an energetic and charismatic service.

On activities & engagement keeping 1.5- and 2<sup>nd</sup>-gen Latinos engaged in their current spiritual home, the top-rated activities and reasons were worship services (32.8%), connecting with the congregation (19%), small group studies (17%), family connections (16.2%), social justice initiatives (16.2%), taking in the holy scriptures (16.2%), and the religious leader (14.6%). For those plugged into a spiritual home, getting and keeping them connected remains an important key for both the religious home and the attendee, on top of the appreciation shown for worship services by 1/3 of respondents.

One can see that this research study matches other studies and past Hispanic/Latino religion narratives, such as Miguel A. De La Torre and Edwin David Aponte's *Introducing Latino/a Theologies*, that shows a steady and continuing decrease in Catholic affiliation. As De la Torre and Aponte state, the mainline Protestants cannot claim to be receiving those Latinos that are leaving the historically traditional Catholic affiliation, but rather this new study shows that it is primarily the Non-Denomination, Agnostic, and Atheist affiliations that grew the most amongst this population.<sup>85</sup> While in recent decades Pentecostals and Evangelicals could claim to be picking up those leaving the Catholic affiliation, especially amongst first-generation Latinos, this new study on Gen Z to X and 1.5- and 2<sup>nd</sup>-generation Latinos shows that even the Pentecostal and Evangelical affiliations have decreased. Insight into this decrease shows that these younger generations are moving away from the strictness, legalism, and judgmental environments of both Catholic and Pentecostal/Evangelical spheres of Christian faith.

This study also asked participants to describe the changes (or lack thereof) of their

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<sup>85</sup> Miguel A. De La Torre, and Edwin David Aponte. *Introducing Latino/a Theologies*. (Maryknoll, NY: ORBIS Books, 2001): 25.

childhood/upbringing religious affiliation in comparison to that of their current affiliation or spiritual practices. These in-depth narratives provided the many scenarios of what this demographic is facing and showed up as a nearly one-third divide amongst those that are disengaged from religion/spiritual practices, those that have gone through substantial changes in their religious/spiritual affiliation and are practicing their new/different affiliation (compared to their childhood/upbringing), and those that are still affiliated with and practicing the affiliation of their upbringing or something very similar to that practice.

Despite all the changes and other priorities that this demographic has going for it, we saw that approximately three-fourth of the demographic placed their spiritual life as either very or somewhat important and about the same state that they want to grow spiritually in the next one to three years. This study shows the diversity in demographic preferences, experiences, values, and affiliations, and it is the hope of the researcher that this breadth of a sample pool for this demographic and this depth of detail into their religious and spiritual insight will help all who attempt to understand and cater ministry, religious, and spiritual outreach and support services for this growing demographic; a demographic that merits having their voice elevated in both the field of theological studies and in the conversation of how to best support their spiritual growth and journey.

## Appendix 1

### **Summary of Key Findings on 1.5- and 2<sup>nd</sup>-Generation Latinos Gen Z – Generation X**

#### **1. Catholic Affiliation Drops by Almost 50%**

While a majority of 1.5- and 2<sup>nd</sup>-gen respondents grew up Catholic at 76.3%, a substantial shift has occurred within this demographic where now only 43.3% affiliate as Catholic. This represents an almost 50% decrease in affiliation (43.25% decrease).

#### **2. Religious “Nones” and Non-denominational Christians Substantially on the Rise**

Only 2.2% of all respondents stated having an agnostic or atheist upbringing; that affiliation has now increased to 19.80% in current affiliation. This is an 800% increase!

For those choosing to maintain their Christian affiliation but are now looking for something different from their upbringing, many are now moving toward non-denominational churches. This is demonstrated through 11.1% of respondents coming from a non-denominational upbringing to now 18.8% choosing to affiliate as non-denominational.

From this survey sample of 1.5- and 2<sup>nd</sup>-gen Latinos, 1 in 5 Latinos are now a religious “none” and 1 in 5 Latinos are now a non-denominational Christian.

#### **3. Do Not Assume Spanish When Launching Latino or Hispanic Outreach**

Language preference for worship services came back rather evenly divided between English, Spanish, and Bilingual preference and those marking “Does not matter”. A small minority from Brazilian heritage prefer Portuguese. With such an even divide, it is very necessary to glean the local preference for language from Latinos within your community and not assume that Hispanic or Latino outreach automatically means that said outreach needs to be in Spanish, especially when working with the 1.5, 2<sup>nd</sup> gen, and beyond.

#### **4. Be Cautious of the Latest Ethnic Identifying Trends**

While various circles in academia and elsewhere have pushed the term Latinx, this national survey of Gen Z, Millennial, and Generation X shows that 82.1% of Latinos still self-identify as “Latino / Latina” and that 49.6% still self-identified as “Hispanic”. Only 14.5% of all respondents chose “Latinx” as their preferred ethnic self-identifying term.

#### **5. Most Latinos Gen Z – X are Open to a Spiritual Leader of Any Ethnicity**

Close to two-thirds (56.8%) state that the ethnicity of their religious leader “does not matter”, showing that a majority do not prefer or require a religious leader of their own ethnicity. However, a sizable minority (32.7%) did state that they do prefer a Latino religious leader.

#### **6. Younger Generations Moving Away from Latino & Spanish-based Congregations**

Participants at 42.7% stated that the ethnicity of their fellow congregants does not matter while 35.5% desire a multicultural congregation. Only 19.8% want to be in a Latino-majority congregation. This shows that almost half do not place an emphasis on their congregational make-up, while a bit more than one-third wants a very intentionally multicultural setting. Given that many within these generations come from Catholic or Protestant Spanish speaking and Hispanic-based churches of their parents, this is a dramatic change in preference and attendance practices from the 1<sup>st</sup>-generation immigrant to the 1.5 or 2<sup>nd</sup> generation.

#### **7. An Inclusive and Less Judgmental Spiritual Home is Key**

Within both the multiple choice and open-ended questions, the desire for a more inclusive and less judgmental environment kept resonating at the top. For younger generations that in many cases grew up in their parents’ traditional Catholic masses or legalistic

Pentecostal and Evangelical environments, they now desire a different approach to spiritual and religious practice. Their top-rated values for a spiritual home included a welcoming and inclusive environment (65.3%), a non-judgmental environment (62%), outreach and service to the community (52.2%), opportunities for spiritual growth and learning (42%), a diverse spiritual home (33.9%), and leadership transparency (27.8%).

#### **8. Latinos are Not a Homogenous Group but Rather the Contrary**

Solely within this survey, participants represented eighteen (18) countries of birth or heritage. This serves as a reminder that Latinos are not a homogenous group, but rather a very diverse set of many distinct groups placed under a very broad cultural umbrella referred to as Latino, Latinx, Hispanic, etc. The diversity of Latinos can be seen through the various backgrounds of nationality, languages spoken, indigenous tribes, religious practices, socio-economic status, political views, et cetera.

#### **9. Substantial Majority Desire Spiritual Growth**

Despite substantial figures for disengaged, agnostic, and atheist 1.5- and 2<sup>nd</sup>-gen Latinos, a sizable majority of 70.1% still rank their spiritual life as very important or somewhat important in comparison to other aspects of their life.

Similarly, 75.9% state that their spiritual growth within the next one to three years is very important or somewhat important to them.

So, the desire for spiritual growth is ripe and present amongst this demographic regardless of the stages and changes in their spiritual journey.

#### **10. Upbringing Affiliation, Changed Affiliation, & No Affiliation on Par at about ⅓**

Latinos that have experienced a substantial change or are considering one stand at 31%, while 37% are engaged and affiliated with a religion or practice related to their religious

upbringing, and 27% are currently disengaged from religion. This showcases the diversity in religious experiences amongst this demographic.

### **11. 1 in 5 are Disengaged within Reach**

From the sample, 17% are “low end disengaged” whose disengagement is often due to busy schedules, ceasing to congregate after leaving the home for college, or craving a spiritual home that caters to their desires now as an adult (e.g. more diversity, less legalism, more social justice emphasis). In most cases, this low-end disengaged population still affiliates to some degree with a specific religion. This demographic could be more easily re-engaged with enough relevant and catered ministry and congregational activities that appeals to this demographic.

### **12. Bring on the Mix of Depth and Energy within Service, Plus Connections**

On worship service preference, the top preference was a service that is intellectual with a deep lecture (41.3%), followed by energetic with plenty of music (38%), charismatic, spiritual and deep with prayer (31%), concise and time-sensitive (26%), and interactive with others (21.1%). So, this demographic wants to be both challenged and engaged intellectually while also appreciating an energetic and charismatic service.

On activities & engagement keeping 1.5- and 2<sup>nd</sup>-gen Latinos engaged in their current spiritual home, the top-rated activities and reasons were worship services (32.8%), connecting with the congregation (19%), small group studies (17%), family connections (16.2%), social justice initiatives (16.2%), taking in the holy scriptures (16.2%), and the religious leader (14.6%). For those plugged into a spiritual home, getting and keeping them connected remains an important key for both the religious



home and the attendee, on top of the appreciation shown for worship services by  $\frac{1}{3}$  of respondents.

## Appendix 2

### Parameters. Terms, & Guidelines Utilized in This Study

1. Religious affiliation is based on self-identification into religious groups.
2. Evangelical Protestants are those who describe themselves as being a born-again Christian or Evangelical Christian. A Pentecostal Christian will be separate and distinguished from the Evangelical category, although overlap between both groups can often be found within the Latino community.
3. Pew (2014) uses **Latino** and **Hispanic** interchangeably.<sup>86</sup> My study primarily will use Latino with the caveat that it could be interchanged with Hispanic and Latinx; while Latinx has been widely accepted in academia at the time of this study, personal preference and utilization by the Latino community show a strong inclination toward still using “Latino” by a majority with Latin American descent in the United States.
4. **Latino** is used as a term to describe anyone, of any gender, from a Latin American country, including South America, Central America, and the Caribbean Islands, and includes Latinos of African ancestry, Asian ancestry, indigenous/native ancestry, White ancestry, Middle Eastern Ancestry, and multi-racial/multi-ethnic ancestry given the waves of diverse migration to Latin America since the 15<sup>th</sup> century.
5. **U.S.-born** and **native-born**: refer to persons born in the United States, and anyone categorized as second generation and third generation will be presumed to have been born in the U.S.
6. **First-generation**: refers to foreign-born individuals who immigrated into the United States. Hence, all first-generation individuals are immigrants and not native U.S.-born,

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<sup>86</sup> Pew Research Center, “Shifting Religious Identity.”

though many of course are proud U.S. citizens by naturalization.

7. **1.5-Generation:** are also foreign-born individuals but moved to the United States as children and hence share many similar attributes with the second generation, both of which grew up as children in the United States.
8. **Second-generation:** refers to people born in the U.S., with at least one first-generation parent.
9. **Third (or higher) generation:** refers to people born in the U.S., with both parents born in the United States.
10. **Bilingual:** refers to persons who are verbally proficient or fluent in at least two languages, notably English and Spanish.
11. **English-dominant:** persons are more proficient in English than Spanish.
12. **Spanish-dominant:** persons are more proficient in Spanish than English.
13. **Ethnic-specific Latinos:** Latinos who participate in churches with heavy nationalistic identities, such as Mexican immigrant-based churches and Puerto Rican based churches in the U.S.<sup>87</sup>
14. **Pan-ethnic Latinos:** Latinos that participate in congregations that still cater toward their ethnic Latino identity but in a way that is inclusive of other Latino nationalities and cultures.<sup>88</sup>
15. **Ethnic Transcendent Latinos:** Latinos who live out their religious and spiritual life in congregations that are not Latino focused but rather multicultural congregations.<sup>89</sup>

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<sup>87</sup> Martí, "Diversity-Affirming Latino," 33.

<sup>88</sup> Martí, "Diversity-Affirming Latino," 33.

<sup>89</sup> Martí, "Diversity-Affirming Latino," 34-36.

- 16. Religious-primary:** Individuals who prioritize religious identity over all others.<sup>90</sup>
- 17. Racialized religion:** In this category religion does not transcend race and ethnicity but rather re-affirms racial boundaries and even divisions among society created by racialized experiences of ethnic minorities in the United States. Latino and Black-based churches would fit this category.<sup>91</sup>
- 18. Ethnoreligious hybridization:** In this category, ethnic groups create a hybrid religious experience that combines their ethnic identity with religious worship, traditions, and congregations, not necessarily in response to society's divisions or discrimination.<sup>92</sup>
- 19. Familistic Traditioning:** This category involves religious traditions that are more customs and traditions of a particular culture, ethnicity, and nationality rather than formal religious groups or practices.<sup>93</sup>
- 20. Unidirectional switching:** The conversion in the U.S. from Catholic to Protestant.<sup>94</sup>
- 21. Assimilation theory:** Theory that explores if Latinos convert to Protestantism as a means of becoming more a part of the dominant U.S. culture as a means of assimilation or acculturation.<sup>95</sup>
- 22. National origin hypothesis:** Hypothesis that the countries that have kept strong ties and dominance of Catholic religion and culture, such as Mexico, Panama, and the Dominican

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<sup>90</sup> Jeung, Chen, and Park, "Religious, Racial, and Ethnic Identities," 12-13.

<sup>91</sup> Jeung, Chen, and Park, "Religious, Racial, and Ethnic Identities," 14.

<sup>92</sup> Jeung, Chen, and Park, "Religious, Racial, and Ethnic Identities," 15-16.

<sup>93</sup> Jeung, Chen, and Park, "Religious, Racial, and Ethnic Identities," 17-18.

<sup>94</sup> Calvillo and Bailey, "Latino Religious Affiliation," 57.

<sup>95</sup> Ramos, Woodberry, and Ellison, "Contexts of Conversion," 124.

Republic, will produce immigrants that are more likely to be Catholic, in comparison to countries that have seen much larger spread and affiliation to Protestant denominations, such as Puerto Rico and Guatemala, which are hypothesized to produce more immigrants that are Protestant.<sup>96</sup>

**23. Semi-involuntary theory:** Theory that predicts that a person is more likely to stay with their family and community associated religion where a religion is a large part of a person's culture and their community's tradition, such as marriage and age ceremonies, and where few incentives present themselves to convert to a different religion (e.g. "cultural Catholics" remain Catholic due to community and family).<sup>97</sup>

**24. Rational choice theory:** Theory that predicts that one will weigh the benefits of pursuing a specific religion and its religious rewards, such as the promise of heaven, social status, and access to networks and people versus the costs of joining that religion, and then choose their religion based on that rational decision.<sup>98</sup>

**25. Semi-shift(s):** A description for individuals that did not express a blatant disregard or substantial change between their current religious affiliation or practice compared to that of their upbringing. Rather, they expressed some kind of "semi-shift" from their religious upbringing where they are still specifically or loosely affiliated to their affiliation as a child but with intentional shifts toward slightly different practices, such as finding a church within the same denominational umbrella that is less strict/legalistic or they themselves still being in the denominational umbrella but individually being more open-

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<sup>96</sup> Ramos, Woodberry, and Ellison, "Contexts of Conversion," 122-123.

<sup>97</sup> Ramos, Woodberry, and Ellison, "Contexts of Conversion," 121.

<sup>98</sup> Ramos, Woodberry, and Ellison, "Contexts of Conversion," 120.

minded on certain traditional or legalistic viewpoints. These individuals have not joined a new religion or dramatically different spiritual practice, but rather remain in the same sphere of theological belief. This term is created by the author of this study.

**26. Circle Back:** A religious affiliation journey for individuals that involves those individuals still practicing the religion of their upbringing after having gone through a journey or time period of either exploring other denominations or religion practices or having disengaged from religion for a period. Then, after this exploration or disengagement, they have “circled back” to the affiliation or practice of their upbringing and childhood.

**27. Coerced Affiliation:** Individuals are forced to practice a certain religion, in part or fully, and have some level of affiliation with a particular religion against their will. The individual does not feel like they have a choice in the matter and if they were to defy the coercion toward a religion placed upon them by another, they would face substantial consequences that currently prevent them from taking that step away from their undesired affiliation or religious practice.

## Appendix 3

### Research Questions Utilized #1 - #25

Questions:

1. [Consent form related]
2. [Consent form related]
3. [Consent form related]
4. [Consent form related]
5. What is your family's heritage? Check all that apply.
6. What term(s) do you use for your ethnic identification? You may choose more than one.
7. What age range and generation do you belong to?<sup>99</sup>
8. Are you second-generation or 1.5?
9. What religion were you raised with by your parents or guardian(s)? Check all that apply if more than one throughout childhood and adolescence.
10. What would you say is your current religion or spiritual practice?
11. How would you describe your religious practices from childhood compared to your current religious or spiritual practices? Was there any change or conversion along the way? If yes, feel free to describe what led to that change. Be as specific as you feel comfortable sharing.
12. Do you or would you prefer to attend religious/spiritual services in English, Spanish, bilingual, or other?
13. Do you prefer to attend a religious/spiritual service with a Latino or Latinx religious leader (such as a Pastor, Priest, Imam, Rabbi, etc.)?

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<sup>99</sup> Generational age ranges are in accordance with the Pew Research Center definitions.

- 14.** Would you prefer to attend a religious or spiritual service where the majority of the other attendees are Latino or Latinx, multicultural, doesn't matter, or other?
- 15.** If you currently have a religious/spiritual home (church, synagogue, mosque, etc.), which of these activities or reasons keep you engaged and going to this spiritual home? Mark all that apply or "Not Applicable" if not currently attending a spiritual home.
- 16.** How would you rate the importance of your religious/spiritual life in comparison to other aspects of your life?
- 17.** How would you rate your desire to grow spiritually (or continue to grow spiritually) within the next one to three years?
- 18.** What aspects of a religious/spiritual home do you value? Select all that apply.
- 19.** What kind of religious or spiritual service do you prefer? Select all that apply or select "Not Applicable" if none.
- 20.** On occasion, do you ever attend a religious/spiritual service outside of your spiritual home? If yes, please describe. Mark "N/A" if not applicable.
- 21.** If you currently have a religious or spiritual home, how often do you attend/frequent it? Mark "Not Applicable" if no current religious/spiritual home.
- 22.** If you have a current religious/spiritual home, would you change and add to its activities in any way?
- 23.** If you have been a part of a religious or spiritual home in the past, have there ever been any activities or aspects of that spiritual home that has negatively impacted your spiritual growth, engagement, or beliefs? If yes, please provide as much detail as you feel comfortable sharing.
- 24.** How could a pastor, chaplain, priest, imam, or any kind of religious/spiritual figure help



you in your spiritual growth and journey?

- 25.** If you attend a spiritual home, what could that spiritual home do to better engage you or help you with your spiritual growth? If you are not engaged with a spiritual home, what could one do to engage you?

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